**NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM ("NOC")**
**COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**
**MEETING MINUTES**
Wednesday, July 1, 2026
2:00 p.m.

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

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| MEMBERS PRESENT: | Commissioner Casey Kozlowski<br>Commissioner Jim Dvorak |
| MEMBERS ABSENT: | Commissioner Sabrina Christian-Bennett |
| OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: | Lisa Milgate (OMJ-GC), Yomna Petrone (PCJFS), Hattie Grubke (OMJ-Ashtabula), John Kravetz (GCJFS), Carly Spencer (OMJ-Portage), Alyssa Steinhoff (GCJFS), Craig Sernik (Area 19 Director), Denise Gehring (Area 19). |

Mr. Kozlowski called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Approval of Past Business

*Approval of the Minutes from May 27, 2026.*
**Mr. Dvorak moved to approve the minutes from May 27, 2026. Mr. Kozlowski seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

*Approval of the Area 19 PY 2026/2027 Meeting Scheule.*
**Mr. Dvorak moved to approve the Area 19 Workforce Program Year 2026/2027 Meeting Schedule. Mr. Kozlowski seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

Election of Officers

**Mr. Dvorak moved to appoint Commissioner Christian-Bennett as CEO. Mr. Kozlowski seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

**Mr. Dvorak moved to appoint Commissioner Kozlowski as Vice President. Mr. Kozlowski seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

Reports

*Administrative Report.* Mr. Sernik reported unemployment numbers for the month of May are 3.2% Ashtabula, 2.9% Portage, and 2.6% Geauga. Ohio will be receiving a $2 million advance of RESEA funds from the feds to distribute out to all 20 workforce areas. Local Area 19 program and fiscal monitoring will be completed later in July. State programmatic monitoring and data validation of the OMJ Ashtabula Center was completed and of the observations none had to do with admitting youth into the program that were not eligible. State fiscal monitoring preliminary

observation was at the administrative level that we are supposed to be justifying the drawing down and expending of the adult, dislocated worker, RESEA, and youth. We have never been told this before. We do not spend money on programming and have been told to draw down the money and use it; it does not matter which pot you draw from it is all administrative money. According to the Ohio Administrative Code there is supposed to be a certification to turn in of which we created and turned into the monitor for the period ending December and July. The DOL monitoring that was supposed to occur is going forward now but without Area 19. ASPIRE in Portage County notified the area their budget had been cut, and they were going to drop out of the Portage MOU, but we have given them a free quarter in hopes that their budget will come back. The area is passing 12 of 15 of the PY25 third quarter unadjusted performance measures but failing the dislocated worker skills gains and youth skills gains. OMJ Certification follow-up for Geauga has completed its outreach plan and has given it to their partners to review and comment. And the handicapped spaces at the OMJ-Ashtabula now have the correct signage up and need the handicapped space closest to the door paint over the symbol on the ground and turn it into an access lane. Mr. Sernik stated he and the WDB Vice Chairperson, Phil Rath, attended the Ohio Workforce Association WDB Chairperson Conference.

*Fiscal Report.*
Mr. Sernik reported there is a definite initial transfer plan for moving excess Geauga money they're in jeopardy of not spending by moving it over to Ashtabula and to Portage to recode against expenditures they already have on the books. But not asking the NOC COG Board to make a decision regarding how the money saved gets spread out. There is $35,000 CCMEP WIOA with $17,500 to go to Ashtabula and $17,500 to Portage to recode, $34,000 adult and $23,000 dislocated worker to Ashtabula to recode, $27,000 dislocated worker to Portage to recode, and Ashtabula is getting an additional $40,000 to recode against RESEA and Portage $60,000 to recode against RESEA.

The Board decided to move the NOC COG Staff Compensation Discussion to the next scheduled meeting on July 22, 2026.

*Presentation of the Administrative Budget for Program Year 2026.*
**Mr. Dvorak moved to approve the Administrative Budget for Program Year 2026 as presented. Mr. Kozlowski seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

Reports of County OMJ Centers

*OMJ Portage County.*
Ms. Spencer stated the OMJ Center did PRC back to school vouchers giving out a total of $97,000 in five days, now have Wagner-Peyser staff in on Wednesdays in the OMJ Center, and CCMEP program has 322 enrolled youth.

*OMJ Ashtabula County.*
Ms. Grubke reported 14 employers with 20 job orders in May, Summer Manufacturing Camps set to run the weeks of July 13th July 20th and July 27th, 17 WIOA briefings in May, 118 individuals visited the resource room with 74 needing assistance with unemployment, 15 TABES, and approved one ITA for radiological technician certification. April unemployment for Ashtabula County was at 3% and March was 4.5% but lost 1,300 out of the labor force. And as of last

Wednesday, CCMEP had 637 enrolled youth with 235 in follow-up, and 40-50 Just Summer youth enrolled.

*OMJ Geauga County*. Ms. Milgate reported the OMJ Center had a presence at Citizen Circle event that is held monthly, also a present at the COSI event held at Berkshire High School for 9th grade students, currently have 33 CCMEP youth with Portage assisting with processing youth, received two intake applications with one who withdrew and one in process, CCMEP is now under the roof of the GCJFS as of April 1st, finalized contract with NESCO and did have first employer who would like to be a work experience site, attended training for the Medicaid work requirement and the Ohio Department of Medicaid has reassured that this should not impact the OMJ the responsibility is going to rest with the client not with the OMJ Center. Did two IWT for Chardon Fire, one was through Tri-C and one through Auburn Career Center for $6,500 total and $7,400 just approved for Ravenwood Health to do ai owl training.

Old Business

None.

New Business

*Amending of the Memorandum of Understanding One Stop Partner PY2026 Budget.*
**Mr. Dvorak moved to Authorize the Area 19 staff and OMJ Managers to amend the Memorandum of Understanding and its Budgets if required by partners for PY26. Mr. Kozlowski seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

*Adult and Dislocated Worker Budgets for Program Year 2026/2027.*

Ashtabula Agreement/Budget:
**Mr. Dvorak moved to authorize an Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Miscellaneous WIOA program services budget allocation to be made available in a contract to Ashtabula County Job & Family Services (ACJFS) for the provision of career services staffing and programming for the period from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2026, in the amounts listed below, pursuant to the details set forth in Attachment.**

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|---|---|
| **a. Adult, D.W. and Misc. Compensation:** | **$715,542.00** |
| **b. RESEA Compensation:** | **$107,686.00** |
| **Total** | **$823,228.00** |

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

Geauga Agreement/Budget:
**Mr. Dvorak moved to authorize an Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Miscellaneous WIOA program services budget allocation to be made available in a contract to Geauga County Job & Family Services (GCJFS) for the provision of career services staffing and programming for the period from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2026, in the amounts listed below, pursuant to the details set forth in Attachment.**

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|---|---|
| **a) Adult, D.W. and Misc. Compensation:** | **$321,553.00** |
| **b) RESEA Compensation:** | **$ 61,548.00** |
| **Total** | **$383,101.00** |

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

Portage Agreement/Budget:

**Mr. Dvorak moved to authorize an Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Miscellaneous WIOA program services budget allocation to be made available in a contract to Portage County Job & Family Services (PCJFS) for the provision of career services staffing and programming for the period from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2026, in the amounts listed below, pursuant to the details set forth in Attachment.**

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|---|---|
| **a) Adult, D.W. and Misc. Compensation:** | **$ 858,698.40** |
| **b) RESEA Compensation:** | **$ 160,000.00** |
| **Total** | **$1,018,698.40** |

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

Total Area Budget combined 3 Counties is $2,225,027.40

*WDB Membership Re-appointments:*

**Mr. Dvorak moved to approve the Slate of Re-appointments to the Area 19 Workforce Board for a 2-year term:**

- **Dr. Angela Spalsbury, Kent State University-Geauga, representing Workforce Higher Education for Geauga County.**
- **Ned Sherry, Kinetico Inc., representing Business for Geauga County.**
- **Kelley Hollander, Viking Forge LLC, representing Business for Portage County.**

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

*Presentation on Workforce Pell and discussion regarding on potential impact on Area 19 policies.*
Mr. Sernik reviewed the Pell grant for short term workforce training handout with all those present. Mr. Sernik reported the Area 19 Workforce Development Board agreed that for the time being the Pell rule will allow us to serve more WIOA students and provide more training dollars to more individuals and their favor is for now to keep the current rule in place and examine it quarterly.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn the Meeting

**Mr. Dvorak moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kozlowski seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.**

Meeting Adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Denise Gehring.