SEMCA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Wednesday, May 21, 2025
SEMCA, 25363 Eureka Road, Taylor, MI 48180
MINUTES

Members Present	Alternates Present	Members Absent
Connie Carroll	Krista McKinney-King	Laura Dickerson
Malin Wagner-Vice-Chair	Jamal Robertson	Jay Steffensky
Hassan Sheikh		Patricia Chatman/Ledgra Johnson
David Lawrence		Christina Pizzo/Astacia Hahn
Charlie Mahoney – Arrived 2:40pm		Lee Graham
Ashleigh Glass-Cooper – Arrived 2:30pm		Bayyinah Robinson/Kwesi McGill
Gerald Hesson – Arrived 2:30pm		
Donna Moser		
Rhonda Turner		
Ann Thompson – Arrived 2:40pm		
Naheed Huq		
Chris LaJoy		

Staff Present	Guests
Gregory Pitoniak	Crystal Nowka-Wayne RESA
Tamara Lamper-Norrix	Dave Struck, SEMCOG
Kate Brady-Medley	A'Nyia Hardwick-Redford Union High School
Bill Hellar	Asia Neal-Redford Union High School
Colleen Mallory	Asha Shaw-Redford Union High School
Dan Martinez	
J.V. de la Fuente	
Charmarrah Bantom	
Deborah Taylor	
Tim Johnston	
Jamie Richardson	

Call to Order
Wagner called the meeting to order at 2:05pm. The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call
Roll call was taken and a quorum was not present. Awaiting quorum Wagner/Pitoniak moved to Agenda Items 9 and 10 presentations.

Wayne County College Access Network Recognition of Student Ambassadors
Jamie Richardson, SEMCA's Workforce Development Associate Project Manager for Wayne County College Access Network provided a PowerPoint presentation on the role of a Student Ambassador and the names, faces and high schools of the current team providing services to their peers. The program was launched in 2023 and has impacted 10 districts through the efforts

of 25 dedicated ambassadors working alongside their career counselors. They have delivered 55 workshops focused on empowering their peers with vital post-secondary knowledge and resources. The sessions have covered a wide range of topics—from scholarship opportunities and self-advocacy to comprehensive guidance on the FAFSA—helping students prepare for life after high school and inspiring awareness of the many possibilities that lie ahead. Richardson introduced A'Nyia Hardwick, a junior at Redford Union High School and a second year Ambassador, as well as Asha Shaw, her career coach who assisted in developing the program and Asia Neal the college and career advisor. All provided insight into their program at Redford Union and the benefits of this program for its students and their families. Pitoniak and the board applauded A'Nyia for her work and provided her with a Certificate of Recognition for a job well done. Board members expressed support for the opportunity to see firsthand the work we are doing beyond the information shared in the boardroom.

SEMCOG Regional Economic Development Strategy: Process and Input Presentation
Naheed Huq and David Struck of SEMCOG requested time to discuss their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Plan for Southeast Michigan by conducting a partner engagement forum based on place, talent, and business, with the SEMCA Workforce Development Board. Every five years the region must update their CEDS to qualify for EDA assistance. They are currently engaging stakeholders/partners to update their strategy plan and create a roadmap to understand where we want to head from an economic standpoint and to open the region up for additional state and federal resources, as funding is always the main goal.

There was a 30-minute question and answer period. Questions included *What do you see as the region's biggest strengths (selling points) when marketing your community or region? What do you see as our region's best economic opportunities? What are the biggest challenges in the workforce development arena? What programs or initiatives are working well? What do you see as the main talent shortages in the region? How do we increase labor participation?* Some of the many positives and opportunities for the region were regional collaboration as a whole especially between business and our colleges and universities; leaders in manufacturing and infrastructure; largest bodies of fresh water, Lake Erie and its port in Monroe; four pro sports teams; NFL Draft and Grand Prix; the beautification of the downtown Detroit; museums like the DIA, The Henry Ford and Greenfield Village, 1812 National Battlefield and General Custer Museum in Monroe; conservation of waterways and parks with outdoor activities for all four seasons; excellent hospitals and medical facilities; opportunity to expand in the manufacturing space; become a tech hub and space for innovation and creativity for more entrepreneurs; hosting many events; and foreign investment and development that creates more jobs. Biggest challenges are creating interest and knowledge of skilled trades and returning those opportunities back into the K-12 system, with qualified instructors; educating students for the current workforce when we are an evolving workforce and should be thinking five years out; teaching basic interpersonal skills like resume writing and confidence in interviewing; helping students understand there is most often a path to the desirable job/career and that industry exposure is important to get there; and of course barriers such as talent shortages, access to public transportation and affordable childcare remain the biggest challenge for our businesses. We need to continue strengthening business and creating collaboration, especially with CTE and

K-12 and continue exposing students to career opportunities; and create opportunities for the justice involved community, which SEMCA is a leader for these programs in the region. Most challenging is receiving enough funding to provide effective programming. Programs working for the region are Going Pro Talent Fund, Manufacturing Day, Operating Engineers Construction Expo, MiCareer Quest, and any program that provides hands-on experience to students; Project Diamond and PACE financing program; pre-apprentice and apprenticeship training opportunities (though more are needed) and talent shortages in skilled labor like electricians, plumbers, specific engineering careers as well as healthcare careers. Pitoniak mentioned DRP (Detroit Regional Partnership) and WIN (Workforce Intelligence Network), two partnerships that are valuable to the region. David and Naheed thanked the board for their robust contributions to this forum and time to this project.

Chair Mahoney apologized for her delay and began chairing the meeting.

Public Comment

Carroll is proud to report that Monroe recently held a large and successful job fair.

Approval of Agenda of May 21, 2025

MOTION-LAJOY, SUPPORT-GLASS-COOPER, approved the Agenda of May 21, 2025, with the move to Agenda Items 9 and 10 to allow the presentations awaiting arrival of quorum. All voting aye, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of April 16, 2025

MOTION-CARROLL, SUPPORT-GLASS-COOPER, approves the Minutes of April 16, 2025 as presented. All voting aye, motion carried.

Recommendation of Workforce Board New Members and Reappointed Members/Alternates

MOTION-LAJOY SUPPORT-CARROLL, to recommend to the SEGA Board for approval to the Workforce Development Board, Ledgra Johnson of Henry Ford College in place of Dr. Patricia Chatman representing the Higher Education Sector for the term of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028. All voting aye, motion carried.

FURTHERMORE, MOTION-HESSON SUPPORT-LAJOY, to recommend approval the reappointments to the Workforce Development Board of Ann Thompson Ford Motor Company, Laura Dickerson and her Alternate Jeff Morris UAW Region 1A, Molly Luempert-Coy and her Alternate Jamal Robertson of DTE Energy, Christina Pizzo and her Alternate Astacia Hahn Henry Ford Hospital-Wyandotte, and Bayyinah Robinson and her Alternate Kwesi McGill of Michigan Rehabilitation Services, for a new three-year term beginning July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028. All voting aye, motion carried.

Review of SEMCA By-laws Per Policy Issuance PI 25-12 WDB WIOA Act Membership Certification

SEMCA received the official Policy Issuance (PI): 25-12 for Local WDB WIOA Membership Certification, which is completed bi-annually for WDB recertification. In accordance with the PI, the Local WDB By-laws must be reviewed and/or updated every two years showing the date the

WDB completed the review. SEMCA is requesting approval to include the USDOL mandated language for Proxy and Alternates as Section 4.18 of the SEMCA By-laws, which was provided for review. Although this option to allow proxy voting is not permitted under the Michigan Open Meetings Act (OMA), we are told we will receive a finding when monitored by the State or USDOL if it is not included. We are recommending the inclusion of this language at this time, but we will maintain that the approval of all Board actions will require a majority of those Board members who are present at the Board meeting.

To effectuate these proposed amendments, both the WD Board and SEGA Board are required to approve the changes, which will become SEMCA's Fourth Amended and Restated Bylaws.

MOTION-LAJOY SUPPORT-WAGNER, to approve the inclusion of language to the SEMCA By-laws regarding Proxy and Alternates per the Policy Issuance for the state's biannual certification of the Workforce Development Board but maintain that Board actions will require a majority of the WDB to be present at the board meeting under the Open Meetings Act. The WDB requests that the SEGA Board approve the changes for the Fourth Amended and Restated By-laws of Southeast Michigan Community Alliance, Inc.

Receive and File 2024-2025 CEAC Metrics Q-3 Report
MOTION-CARROLL, SUPPORT-GLASS-COOPER, to approve the Quarter 3 CEAC Metrics Report, as presented. All voting aye, motion carried.

CEO Report

- Pitoniak recognized Connie Carroll who was recently honored as Philanthropist of the Year for GROW in Monroe County. Congratulations!
- Update provided on the Grosse Pointe and Livonia facility closures. We are proceeding as planned. The landlord has agreed to allow PATH services to remain in our current location in Livonia, and MRS is negotiating with the landlord to continue services in their space through the state. Mayor Brosnan, Chair of the Conference of Western Wayne asked Pitoniak to present to the members of the CWW. He provided a PowerPoint presentation with the data to support our recommended closures. They were disappointed but understood that the CWW still has the Dearborn and Wayne AJC's available in their region and the reasons behind the decision to close the Livonia AJC.
- The state has allocated $2 million of their WIOA reserve funds to the 13 MWA's that incurred an allocation reduction in their PY25 WIOA formula funding effective July 1, 2025. SEMCA will receive $250,000 of this allocation, which will primarily allow us to strengthen the capacity of the five remaining AJCs to address the additional customers they will be serving.
- Our Communications team is developing the content for informing the public of these closures for our website and posting at each center to ensure smooth transitions. If you hear anything or think of something we should be doing, please do not hesitate to share. Brady-Medley discussed the meetings with partners addressing their questions and the concerns. Mahoney noted that the Livonia Mayor is concerned with how we are going to connect with customers and the public. Pitoniak noted the existing customers

will be transferred to someone on staff at one of our other AJC's. As we get closer to closing dates we will publicize with social media, sharing with communities in immediate proximity, press releases and a QR code and signage on the buildings that will take them to our website's FAQ page for more information. It was suggested to do outreach with the communities in northwest Wayne County regarding their options.

- SEMCA received its first DOGE cut of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) program. The state received a stop work notice late Friday evening on its Digital Equity Capacity Grant, taking back the $858,000 that would fund digital skills training and foster improved Internet access in rural communities with poor or limited service. This grant was for Monroe County only. Fortunately, it was a new program and little of the funding was received/spent. The state is pushing hard for reinstatement of the funds.
- Pitoniak discussed President Trump's 90-day executive order related to restructuring and consolidation of education and workforce development programs. Secretaries of Education, Labor and Commerce will review all workforce programs redirecting or eliminating funds for ineffective programs or programs that failed to achieve the desired outcomes. They will be looking for opportunities to invest in the upskilling of incumbent workers and strategies to identify alternative credentials and assessments to the four-year college degree that can be mapped to specific skill needs of the employer. Recommendations will be provided to the president in July. Pitoniak noted that Michigan is #2 in the country with apprenticeships, and we have a strong efficient workforce system in place that should be adopted nationwide to help them achieve these goals.
- The EO has likely stalled the WIOA Reauthorization process. Pitoniak provided a handout of a letter addressed to Congressman Walberg created by the 16 MWA directors with the consultation of our Washington lobbyists requesting an opportunity to share our system's structure, outcomes, and innovative strategies with USDOL and peers across the country providing input into the new workforce system.
- The new administration wants to support US manufacturing, but they want to dismantle the Biden EV programs. Since 2024, 25% of vehicles sold worldwide were electric vehicles. If the US wants to compete with vehicle manufacturing, then we need to be a substantial player in the EV industry.
- The federal budget recommendations proposed by President Trump have massive cuts and domestic program cuts are expected, which could affect us.
- Pitoniak and three other MWA's directors have met with Congressman Walberg regarding WIOA reauthorization, which would be acted upon in the House Committee that he chairs, and we are hoping to meet with his Washington staff to continue discussions of our concerns and suggestions.
- WayneLINC is doing very well now that the payment process is in place.

- Governor and the Senate have released their budgets recommending Going Pro Talent Fund, Michigan Skills Fund and Jobs for Michigan Graduates at their current funding level. The House Speaker has not advanced a House version of the budget and is looking for $3 billion in cuts to support road funding. If they cannot agree on a budget by September 30, there would be a state shutdown.
- Labor Market information is the latest from March. US unemployment rate is 4.2% up from 4.1%; MI is 5.5% up from 5.4%; SEMCA Region – Wayne County is 6.5% which is the same as February; and Monroe County is 6.1% down from 7.0%.

Program Updates

Due to the late hour Pitoniak apologized to the staff and noted the program updates are available in the Board packet. He did cover the Dashboard and Program Statistical Summary. No questions were asked at this time.

New/Old Business

The next SEMCA Board meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2025, at 2:00pm. The RFP Contractor recommendations will be on the agenda, and we will need a quorum for this meeting to approve those contracts.

Pitoniak noted the Workforce Development Board Recertification is completed biannually and is due to the state on June 30, 2025. The Conflict of Interest Statement required by the state for this process was emailed to each member/alternate. Tamara noted that she has received some signed forms back and has forms available for signature for any board member in attendance that has not yet returned their form.

Adjourn

MOTION-HESSON, SUPPORT-GLASS-COOPER to adjourn meeting. Meeting adjourned at 4:06pm. All voting aye, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Minutes Adopted on 7/16/2025

Tamara Lamper-Norrix
Executive Assistant