Full Board Meeting
Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 10:00 AM MST

NALWDB Conference Room
525 Camino De Los Marquez
Suite 250
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Floyd Archuleta:	Present
Krutik Bhakta:	Excused
Sarah Boisvert	Excused
Dr. Rebecca Estrada:	Present/Zoom
Maria Herrera:	Excused
Rudy Garcia	Absent
Clarence Maestas	Present
Jennifer Martinez	Present/Zoom
Mario Lucero:	Present
Pablo Lujan	Present
Sean Medrano:	Present/Zoom
Jolene Nelson:	Present/Zoom
Mayor David Romero	Excused
Jon Paul Romero	Present/Zoom
Kevin Romero	Excused
Arthur Sparks	Present
Chair Joseph Weathers	Present
Marco Serna	Absent
Tammy Wilhelm	Absent

Present: 11, Excused: 8.
Also in attendance: NALWDB Staff: Lisa Ortiz - Executive Director, Barney Trujillo - Operations Manager, Ruthie Mares – Quality Assurance Specialist, Issy Lozano – Program Support Specialist. **Guests:** Ericka Van Eckhoutte – Adult/DW Director, Concha Cordova YDI, Rene Martinez – One Stop Operator, Veronica Alonzo NMDWS, Chanin Kelly O'Rourke – DWS, Ramon Pazos – NMDWS, Margarito Aragon – NMDWS, Rosina Espinoza – NMDWS, Becky Vega – NMDWS, Sandy Trujillo Medina – YDI Chief Operations Officer, Robert Chavez – YDI CEO, Derrick Grasmick – WIOA North Program Manager.

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM by Chairman Joseph Weathers.

2. Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum

Roll call was conducted by NALWDB Program Support Specialist Issy Lozano, who reported that a quorum was present.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

4. Approval of Agenda

Chairman Weathers asked for an Amendment of the agenda. Item 6.1A through 6.1C, will not be action items, it will just be discussion, so there will not be action items. Requested a motion to amend that Items 6.1A, 6.1B and 6.1C and 6.2 will be items for discussion.

Motion to amend the agenda. This Motion was made by Arthur Sparks seconded by Board Member Floyd Archuleta and passed by roll call vote unanimously.

5. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the March 31, 2026, full board meeting minutes. This motion was made by Arthur Sparks, seconded by Mario Lucero, and passed by roll call vote unanimously.

6. Action Items

Chairman Joseph Weathers stated that at the next meeting, the Board will review performance reports from the Quality Assurance Specialist, Ruthie Mares, and the State monitor. He emphasized the importance of Board members having complete information, including administrative and monitoring reports, before making decisions regarding contract extensions or issuing an RFP. Service providers would present their performance reviews at today's meeting, and the Board would consider an action item at the June 18 meeting regarding contract extensions or an RFP process.

Program Support Specialist Issy Lozano stated that for the record, Board Member Pablo Lujan joined the meeting in person at 10:08am.

6.1. Contract and Performance Review.

6.1A. YDI – Youth Subrecipient

Concha Cordova, YDI, reported that youth enrollment and placement activities continue to require significant staff time due to participant documentation, assessments, appointments, labor market research requirements, and program compliance. She noted challenges in recruiting employer worksites for youth work experience placements and stated that outreach efforts to businesses remain ongoing. Ms. Cordova also highlighted staff attendance at the New Mexico Workforce Conference and recognized Youth Development Practitioner Cheryl Clani for being honored at YDI's April Board of Directors meeting for her outstanding work with youth in Cibola and McKinley Counties.

Concha Cordova reported that the region is now meeting or exceeding three of the five youth performance measures. Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) remain below target but increased by 17.24% since the previous quarter, and continued progress is expected through participant incentives tied to MSG achievement. Credential attainment continues to be the most challenging performance measure due to older participant data still impacting outcomes. Median earnings remain above target despite a slight decrease. Ms. Cordova also shared a participant success story highlighting a Taos youth participant placed in a cosmetology work experience opportunity who plans to pursue cosmetology school in Santa Fe.

Derrick Grasmick introduced himself as the new YDI Program Manager for the Northern Region and expressed his appreciation to the Board for the opportunity. Mr. Grasmick stated that he looks forward to working with youth participants, assisting them with work experience opportunities, and helping them expand their knowledge and skills in the workforce.

Chairman Joseph Weathers asked YDI representatives whether the organization was currently facing any litigation that could impact its financial performance or ability to serve the Board. Robert Chavez – YDI CEO, responded that while YDI is not contractually required to disclose such matters, the organization wished to remain transparent. Robert Chavez stated that YDI is currently involved in pending litigation related to allegations involving a child under its care. He explained that YDI disputes portions of the allegations and maintains that all organizational and state policies were followed. Robert Chavez further stated that the litigation is not expected to impact YDI's financial stability, noting that the organization is well insured and supported by legal counsel. He also referenced concerns regarding a potential conflict of interest matter and stated that a letter had been submitted requesting review by the Board and the State. Robert Chavez further stated that the timing of the question raised concerns for YDI and referenced a potential conflict of interest matter involving Board bylaws related to disclosure and recusal requirements. He stated that YDI believes certain bylaws may not have been followed and provided a letter to the Board and the State requesting review of the matter. Chairman Weathers stated he had no questions following the statement.

Chairman Joseph Weathers stated that he first became aware of the YDI litigation through a newspaper article published in The New Mexican and expressed concern that the Board had not been notified sooner. Chairman Weathers clarified that his daughter's employment with YDI had previously been disclosed and stated that his intent was to ensure the Board remained informed of matters that could affect the perception of the Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board and its providers. He referenced a prior experience involving another provider organization and emphasized the importance of transparency regarding litigation matters.

Robert Chavez – YDI CEO, thanked Chairman Weathers for the clarification and stated that YDI had notified parties in accordance with contractual obligations and legal guidance. He explained that the matter was disclosed to the appropriate funding agency and YDI's Board immediately following the allegations. Robert Chavez further stated that no findings or judgments have been made in the case and acknowledged that YDI did not notify the Board because the matter was outside the scope of the organization's contract with NALWDB, adding that the situation served as a "lesson learned."

Chairman Joseph Weathers reiterated that the Board's concern was to ensure transparency and protect the reputation of the Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board, particularly as YDI serves as the region's youth provider. He stated that the Board wanted to avoid being negatively associated with public allegations involving providers and emphasized that the concern was not intended to single out YDI, but rather to ensure mutual communication and professional courtesy regarding matters that could impact public perception.

Robert Chavez acknowledged the Chairman's concerns and stated that YDI had no pending litigation at the time of the RFP process and that the matter arose afterward. He explained that YDI operates multiple programs and departments and emphasized that the organization maintains internal safeguards, insurance coverage, and policies to address such situations. Mr. Chavez further stated that YDI views itself as a learning organization and acknowledged that the organization could have communicated the matter more proactively with Board partners. Chairman Weathers noted that disclosure should not compromise legal defense efforts and reiterated that the discussion centered on communication and transparency. No further questions were raised by Board members.

6.1B. Career TEAM – Subrecipient Adult/DW.

Ericka Van Eckhoutte – Career TEAM, reported progress toward PY25 Adult and Dislocated Worker enrollment, training, and performance goals, highlighting increased Dislocated Worker enrollments, improved training provider partnerships, and expanded virtual and rural outreach services. Staff stated that Adult expenditures are projected to end the year at 46.3% and Dislocated Worker expenditures at 66%, with approximately $1 million anticipated to carry over into the next program year.

Ericka discussed plans to launch Department of Corrections training cohorts earlier in the year, investing approximately $175,000 to serve returning citizens, while also increasing OJT and TJT placements. Additional strategies include assisting participants with licensure and certification costs to improve credential attainment outcomes.

She also highlighted improvements in performance outcomes, increasing from meeting 20% of measures in PY24 to currently meeting 60% in PY25. Staff noted

strong improvements in measurable skill gains (MSGs), positive feedback received during monitoring activities, and the implementation of "Employer Fast Track Sessions" to improve employer engagement and streamline placement processes. The first session held on May 12, 2026 included 18 employers from across the region.

Ericka Van Eckhoutte concluded the presentation by sharing participant success stories, including dislocated worker and veteran Pooya Rezai, who completed 3D printing training and launched his business, "Noosh Jars," through Career TEAM services.

Chairman Joseph Weathers asked Career TEAM whether the organization was currently involved in any federal or state litigation that could impact its performance with the Board. Anthony Terlizzi responded that Career TEAM is not currently involved in any litigation affecting its operations. Mr. Terlizzi noted that a recent procurement-related lawsuit in the State of Oregon involved another vendor contesting the state's procurement decision after Career TEAM had been selected for a statewide case management system contract; however, the lawsuit was recently dismissed and did not involve allegations against Career TEAM.

6.1C. One Stop Operator – Evaluation.

Chairman Joseph Weathers acknowledged Rene Martinez's upcoming departure as One-Stop Operator and thanked him for his service and contributions to the Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board. Chairman Weathers expressed appreciation for Rene Martinez's work and wished him success in his future endeavors.

Rene Martinez thanked the Board, staff, partners, and the State for the opportunity to serve the northern New Mexico region. He stated that it had been a humbling experience working with local communities and America's Job Centers and expressed his hope to continue making a positive impact in future endeavors before proceeding with his report.

Rene Martinez, One-Stop Operator, presented the PY25 One-Stop Operator Evaluation and reported positive overall results, with nine evaluation areas rated "Good" and two rated "Outstanding," including customer-friendly employment services and partner conflict resolution. Mr. Martinez highlighted strengths in partner coordination, monthly cross-training meetings, customer service navigation, employer and youth engagement activities, and the use of customer satisfaction feedback to improve services.

He also identified areas for improvement, including ensuring all required MOUs are current and strengthening outcome-based reporting with clearer performance

metrics and data tracking. He stated that future efforts will focus on improving reporting measures, maintaining partner collaboration, and continuing integrated outreach and referral practices throughout the workforce system.

Chairman Joseph Weathers asked Rene Martinez, One-Stop Operator, whether the organization was currently involved in any federal or state litigation that could impact its performance with the Board. Rene Martinez responded that he was not the appropriate individual to address that question.

6.2 Grants AJC – Termination of Lease Agreement.

Madam Executive Director Lisa Ortiz presented the termination of lease agreement for the Grants America's Job Center (AJC), stating that the location was not being fully utilized while lease payments continued to the same landlord as the Gallup location. Rene Martinez noted that although some services were still being utilized in the area, several office spaces remained largely unused, including by DWS staff who frequently travel. Mr. Martinez stated that, in his opinion, continuing to maintain the unused office space was not cost effective and that the funds could be better utilized elsewhere. Madam Executive Director Lisa Ortiz stated that she would like to further discuss the matter with workforce partners before moving forward to ensure that terminating the Grants AJC lease is the appropriate decision.

7. Informational Reports

7.1 Board Chair Report – Joseph Weathers

Chairman Joseph Weathers stated that the Board does not want to serve as a "rubber stamp" body and emphasized the importance of Board members receiving complete information regarding provider performance and monitoring outcomes. He referenced prior unallowable costs incurred by the organization and stated that receiving reports from both the administrative team and State monitors helps ensure Board members can make informed decisions regarding provider contracts, renewals, or future RFP processes.

7.2 Executive Director Report – Lisa Ortiz

Madam Executive Director Lisa Ortiz reported that she continues working closely with Veronica Alonzo from DWS regarding the USDOL findings and stated that 9 out of the 17 findings have been officially closed. Ms. Ortiz reported that staff are currently addressing Finding #13 related to the money market account, noting that she and Rick Sandoval will be meeting with banking institutions to ensure account fees are not being charged.

Madam Executive Director further stated that Finding #14 regarding Kellogg Grant costs has been addressed through reports and supporting documentation submitted by staff to DWS for review and forwarding to USDOL. She also reported that Finding #17 regarding

administrative cost allocation has been addressed through an analysis and cost allocation plan completed and submitted by Rick Sandoval.

Regarding Findings #8 and #9 involving OJT and TJT disallowed costs, Madam Executive Director stated that the Board will continue working with the previous service provider to recover and document the questioned costs. Madam Executive Director additionally reported that the Board has received its preliminary PY26 allocation from DWS, which currently reflects an approximate 9.2% reduction from the prior year's funding allocation, although minor adjustments may still occur.

7.3. Financial Report – Fiscal Agent Rick Sandoval.

No report was presented by Rick Sandoval, Fiscal Agent, due to his absence from the Board meeting because of a scheduling conflict with a training.

7.4 NM DWS Report – Veronica Alonzo.

Veronica Alonzo, DWS, reported that DWS is currently working on the annual grant agreements and aims to have all agreements completed and signed by the end of June. Veronica Alonzo noted that Youth Committees will now be required under the grant agreement and stated that the State Board will also be establishing a Youth Committee to support youth service providers.

Veronica Alonzo further reported that local boards may begin submitting Local Plans proactively once the NMDWS plan is approved. She also discussed ongoing DWS efforts to strengthen partnerships with Native American workforce entities, noting that the Northern Region has been selected as the first region to partner with Native workforce organizations. Tribal partners will receive access to NMJobs to support participant coordination and service tracking, and DWS is working to ensure all required MOUs are in place.

It was also reported that the State Board created an ad hoc committee following a formal participant complaint involving the Northern Area. Although the complaint was resolved, the committee was established to review intake and enrollment processes across all four local workforce boards and identify opportunities for improvement.

She stated that the second response to the USDOL findings has been submitted and that the Board is currently awaiting a response from USDOL. She also clarified that although CPLC receives CSBG funding, the organization is not required to sign the WIOA MOU because it does not directly provide employment and training services. DWS is currently awaiting further guidance from USDOL regarding the CSBG MOU matter.

Veronica Alonzo concluded her report by thanking the Board for its continued support and encouraged Board members to attend the upcoming conference.

8. Public Comments.

During public comment, Robert Chavez – YDI CEO, stated that the current 75% out-of-school youth and 25% in-school youth requirement functions more as an intervention model. Robert Chavez encouraged the Board to consider opportunities to support youth earlier and stated that services should not wait until youth are already disengaged or out of school before assistance is provided.

10. Next Meeting Date: June 18, 2026.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 11:46am. This Motion was made by Board Member Pablo Lujan seconded by Board Member Arthur Sparks and passed unanimously.

An Executive Session may be called at any time during the meeting. Pursuant to New Mexico Open Meetings Act Section 10-15-1 (H) Subsections; (1) Meetings pertaining g to issuance, suspension, renewal or revocation of a license, except that a hearing at which evidence is offered or rebutted shall be open. All final actions on the issuance, suspension, renewal or revocation of a license shall be taken at an open meeting; (2) Limited personnel matters; provided that for purposes of the Open Meetings Act, "limited personnel matters" means the discussion of hiring, promotion , demotion, dismissal, assignment or resignation of or the investigation or consideration of complaints or charges against any individual public employee; provided further that this paragraph is not to be construed as to exempt final actions on personnel from being taken at open public meetings, nor does it preclude an aggrieved public employee from demanding a public hearing. Judicial candidates interviewed by any commission shall have the right to demand an open interview; (3) Deliberations by a public body in connection with an administrative adjudicatory proceedings For purposes of this paragraph, "administrative adjudicatory proceeding" means a proceeding brought by or against a person before a public body in which individual legal rights, duties or privileges are required by law to be determined by the public body after an opportunity for a trial-type hearing. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the actual administrative adjudicatory proceeding at which evidence is offered or rebutted and any final action taken as a result of the proceeding shall occur in an open meeting; (4) The discussion of personally identifiable information about any individual student, unless the student or the student's parent or guardian requests otherwise; (5) Meetings for the discussion of bargaining strategy preliminary to collective bargaining negotiations between the policymaking body and a bargaining unit representing the employees of that policymaking body and collective bargaining sessions at which the policymaking body and the representatives of the collective bargaining unit are present; (6) that portion of meetings at which a decision concerning purchases in an amount exceeding two thousand five hundred dollars ($2,500) that can be made only from one source is discussed and that portion of meetings at which the contents of competitive sealed proposals solicited pursuant to the Procurement Code are discussed during the contract negotiation process. (7) Meetings subject to the attorney-client privilege pertaining to threatened or pending litigation in which the public body is or may become participant; (8) Meetings for the discussion of the purchase, acquisition or disposal of real property or water rights by the public body.