

Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Northwest Georgia

Wednesday, January 21, 2026, Noon

Georgia Northwestern Technical College
Calhoun, Georgia

Minutes

Attendance-WDB

WDB Members Present, County:

Amanda Barber, Polk
Cynthia Brown, Paulding
Bethany Gilmer, Floyd
Barry Gentry, Murray
Scott Hendrix, Polk
Jim Henry, Chattooga
Randy Long, Pickens
Robert Milburn, Whitfield
Mike Murphy, Bartow
Deshawn Richardson, Paulding
Elizabeth Scott, Bartow
Chris Thomas, Polk
Carey Tucker, Floyd

WDB Members Not Present, County:

Andy Allen, Chattooga
Marion Barber, Bartow
Kate Daggett, Floyd
Selena Galmon, Bartow
Steven Henry, Catoosa
Lisa Shaw, Floyd
Jason Smith, Gilmer
Robert Strickland, Gordon
Cam Wallace, Bartow
Marianne Wood, Polk

NWGRC Staff:

Michele Abdul-Qawiy
Boyd Austin
Susan Gentry
Beth Kelley
Lesia Lambert
Terri Morgan
Anthony Rucker
Phyllis Walker

Guests/Visitors:

Al Abernathy
Ethan Branch
Larry Brooks
Alencia Crowder
Amy Denney
Rick Goble
Lisa Ives
Mitchell Jackson
Lynn Long
Nikia M. Johnson
Michael O'Neal
Stuart Phillips
Anne Rapp
Pamela Regulus
Claude Ricketts
Tiffany Taylor
Mia Williams
Gena Williams

I. Welcome and Lunch Mike Murphy, Chairman

Mike Murphy, Chairman, called the meeting to order and welcomed those present. It was established that a quorum was present for the Workforce Development Board.

II. Nikia M. Johnson, Workforce Development Specialist, Georgia Power

III. New Members, Staff, and Guests Mike Murphy, Chairman

New Board Members, partners, and staff introduced themselves.

IV. Minutes Mike Murphy, Chairman

Mr. Murphy informed those present that *Minutes* from the August 20, 2025 meeting had been e-mailed and was also attached for review (since there was not a quorum at the October meeting). Amanda Barber made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Deshawn Richardson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

V. WDB Bylaws Terri Morgan

Terri Morgan presented an updated copy of the WDB Bylaws to reflect guidance from the Technical College System of Georgia (handout attached). The addition is as follows:

"Upon the election of a CLEO, hiring of a LWDA Director, or election of a LWDB Chairman, the LWDA must notify the Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development (OWD) within 10 business days. The LWDA must also notify OWB, within 10 business days of any major staff changes, including management new hires, promotions, and/or any terminations/layoffs. This notification should be directed to WIOACompliance@tcsg.edu and must include contact information for the individual and documentation that supports the assumption of the new role. Examples of acceptable documentation may include LWDB minutes, a letter of appointment from the CLEO in accordance with the local policy, or an offer letter."

Carey Tucker made the motion to approve this change. Elizabeth Scott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

VI. March Meeting Location Terri Morgan

Ms. Morgan informed the Board that the Georgia Northwestern Technical College, Gordon Campus Conference Center, was unavailable for the March WDB meeting and that staff had secured the Floyd County Campus location for the next meeting.

Jim Henry made the motion to approve this change. Deshawn Richardson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

VII. October Meeting Actions

A. Chattahoochee Technical College Request Phyllis Walker

Phyllis Walker informed the Board that Chattahoochee Technical College requested that UX (User Experience) Designing and Development be added as an approved program for Northwest Georgia. She noted that this is an existing program that they currently offer without WIOA assistance. The UX program prepares the students to create websites, software, and other products. Students will successfully implement UX design processes and design strategies to produce User Experience Designs that span multiple devices, including PCs, phones, and tablets. UX Design careers include product research, creating user personas and scenarios, website prototyping, and product testing. She also presented the following additional information (handout attached).

Credential Earned	UX Design and Development associate's degree (AAS) UX Design and Development Diploma
Length of Training	AAS 2 years (curriculum hours totaling 67 credit hours) Diploma (curriculum hours totaling 58 credit hours)
Cost of the Program	AAS Degree: \$12,569 Diploma: \$11,630 WIOA maximum is \$6,500. Hope and Pell Eligible
Number of Students in the programs in the last 12 months	64
Median Earnings	AAS: \$51,000
Attainment of Post-Secondary Credential	The number of completers exiting who obtained a credential within one year after exit. 10 with AAS; 8 with a diploma

Staff recommended approval to add this program to WorkSource Northwest Georgia's list of vendor training for Chattahoochee Technical College contingent upon availability of funds. Jim Henry made the motion to approve the program. Carey Tucker seconded. Motion carried with Cynthia Brown and Randy Long abstaining (due to employment and spouse's employment, respectively) and with no dissenting vote.

B. HERO Request Phyllis Walker

Ms. Walker presented a request from Health Education Reimagined Online (HERO) Institute to add Medical Assistant to Northwest Georgia's ETPL (handout attached). This program has already been approved by the State Workforce Board. The Medical Assistant program is a comprehensive course designed to teach students the skills needed to provide care for patients in a clinic setting. The program focuses on both administrative and clinical competencies such anatomy and physiology of all body systems, administrative functions such as appointment scheduling, insurance billing, and office management, as well as clinical functions including administering medications, venipuncture skills, obtaining and recording medical histories and vital signs, medication administration, and preparation of the patient and treatment rooms for physician examinations.

Upon completion of the course, graduates may pursue a career in a clinical setting under the supervision of a licensed physician and function as a vital part of the healthcare team. Students have five years from the date of training to sit for the national exam to become a Certified Clinical Medical Assistant.

Medical Assistant	An instructional program in allied health and medical assisting services.
Cost of the Program	\$7,000 (WIOA maximum is \$6,500) Not Hope and Pell eligible.
Credential Earned	Industry-recognized certificate of completion, a CCMA, and BLS
Length of Training	37 weeks

Staff requested approving this program to the WorkSource Northwest Georgia's list of vendor training for HERO Institute contingent upon availability of funds. Elizabeth Scott made the motion to approve this request (not to exceed the \$6,500 WIOA maximum). Chris Thomas seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Committee & Staff Reports

A. Fiscal Report Anthony Rucker

Anthony Rucker presented a **Grant Summary (7/1/2025-12/31/2025)** for Worksource Northwest Georgia (attached) encompassing the Adult; Dislocated Worker; QUEST; Rapid Response; and Youth programs, noting that the QUEST program ended in September 2025. Jim Henry made the motion to accept. Deshawn Richardson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Youth Committee Report & Recommendations Lesia Lambert

Lesia reported that the Youth Committee met on Wednesday, January 21, 2026 and had no actions to vote upon.

C. Business Services & Mobile Career Center Report Michele Abdul-Qawiy

Michele Abdul-Qawiy informed those present that the Mobile Career Center had been scheduled for a number of events across the Northwest Georgia region, including those for resume building and job search. Additionally, WorkSource Northwest Georgia staff continues to assist with layoffs and closures in the region.

D. One-Stop Report Alencia Crowder

Alencia Crowder gave a report on the numbers of individuals served at each One-Stop Center.

IX. Demand Occupations List Lesia Lambert

Ms. Lambert presented a list of Demand Occupations for Northwest Georgia, provided by the Technical College System of Georgia. She asked that the WDB approve this list. Deshawn Richardson made the motion to accept. Randy Long seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Other

Mr. Murphy informed the Board that the Technical College System of Georgia will be monitoring the region during the week of February 9, 2026.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.