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A Michigan Works! Agency

MEETING:	DESC Program Services Committee Meeting	DATE:	February 3, 2026
ATTENDEES:	DESC Committee / Board Members: Alice Thompson, Lena Barkley, Ric Preuss, Rian English Barnhill (remote), John Perkins (remote), Dannis Mitchell, Terri Weems DESC Staff: Stephanie Nixon, Lexus Lenton, Rachel May, Madelyne Bernard-Diab, Darilyn Draper, Ericka Page, Nneka Carter-Young, Dana Williams, Carmen Bender, Talitha Johnson, Robert Shimkoski, Caletia Binion, Linsey Gillery Remote Staff: Lucia Seed, Michelle Hodges, Karen LeGendre, Guests: Shaheta Jenkins, Noah Kincaid, Detroit Notetaker	LOCATION:	DESC Corporate Offices 115 Erskine, 2 nd Fl Detroit, MI 48201
		CALLED TO ORDER:	10:33 a.m.
ABSENT:	Excused: Unexcused: None	ADJOURNED:	11:47 a.m.
FACILITATOR:	Alice Thompson, Board Chair and Committee Chairperson	DATE MINUTES APPROVED/ADOPTED:	March 2, 2026

ITEM	DISCUSSION	OUTCOME/ACTION ITEM(S)
I. Welcome & Introductions	Alice Thompson, Board Chair and Committee Chairperson, called the meeting to order	
II. Agenda Approval / Minutes	Ms. Thompson asked for approval of the agenda for the February 3, 2026 meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion: Ric Preuss • Supported: Terri Weems • Motion Carried – Unanimously Ms. Thompson asked for approval of the Minutes for the November 12, 2025 meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion: Lena Barkley • Supported: Ric Preuss • Motion Carried – Unanimously 	
III. Chairperson Update	Ms. Thompson reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fiduciary role of the Board is in ensuring accountability, transparency, and accurate, timely organizational communication. • Emphasis on maintaining proactive communication with the Board to support informed decision-making. • Expectation that leadership brings forward emerging risks, concerns, system pressures, or performance challenges in a timely manner, even if issues are still being evaluated or are not fully resolved. • Early escalation supports stronger governance and organizational risk management. 	



<p>IV. Program Services Update: Workforce System and Contract Updates</p>	<p>Stephanie Nixon, Chief Program Services Officer, opened with an introduction to Darilyn Draper, Director, Adult Program Services and Ericka Page, Director, Youth Program Services, both of DESC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detroit at Work Adult Career Center Contracts (Program Year 2024-2025) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most providers met/exceeded employment goals; slight training shortfalls but generally acceptable. • Majority recommended for renewal; some placed on PIPs; minor site/provider structure changes. • System target-5,000 placements; average wage \$17/hour; shift toward higher-wage, poverty-reduction outcomes. • Board emphasized system-level goal alignment, stronger data use, and future reporting on quality, wages by center, and customer demographics. • Career Center Innovation and Modernization Timeline Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System Training & Quality Improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data quality and quality assurance training implemented • Customer Passport/ My Career Plan reintroduced as required next-steps planning tool. • ISS/IEP goal-setting training reinforced as a “living document” for participant progress tracking. • State & Compliance Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Michigan (LEO) provided PATH, Food Assistance (FAE&T/FAE&T+), case noting, and performance metrics training. • Additional training provided in response to food assistance waiver changes impacting participant volume. • Service Delivery Innovation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career pathway coaching training (cohort-based engagement and retention strategies). • POD team model launched at select sites (career coach + business services + resource navigator working jointly with customers). • Motivational interviewing training is implemented for career coaches. • Detroit Youth at Work Provider Network (2025-2026 Cycle) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift in terminology from Out-of-School Youth to Opportunity Youth (OY; ages 15–24 not connected to school or work). • Service Snapshot <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SER Metro- 413 youth • Urban Neighborhood Initiatives- 150 youth, including OY • Youth Connection- 135 youth • Union- 125 in-school youth, citywide • YMCA- 100 in-school youth 	<p>(1) Engage the Committee as annual system goals for # customers served, # placed, # trained are contemplated and established; employ the data-based method in place, consider neighborhood demographics as we set those goals per center, and embed into future committee meeting agendas.</p> <p>(2) Compliance & monitoring activities and results to be reported to both A&F and Program Services Committees.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on diploma attainment, employment placement, work-based learning, and retention tracking. • Average cost per participant estimated at \$3K-\$3.5K • GDYT/Boys & Girls Club Specialized Model: \$500K serving 125 youth using industry masterclass training and hands-on career exposure (media, tech, mobility/manufacturing, fashion/design) <p>Committee discussion ensued.</p>	
V. Presentation: BeNext	<p>Nneka Carter-Young, Director Support Services, DESC, highlighted the impactful work of the Be Next Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brightmoor neighborhood-focused workforce pilot serving residents with significant employment barriers using high-support, cohort-based model. • Combines Jumpstart elements, individualized services, behavioral health supports, and partner collaboration to test scalable workforce strategies. • Outcomes & Pipeline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 participants have progressed into career pathways or training tracks • 84 participants are currently in the recruitment pipeline • Cohort sizes typically range from 10-15 participants <p>Committee discussion ensued.</p>	
VI. Public Comment	There were no public comments	
VII. Adjournment	<p>Ms. Thompson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion: Ric Preuss • Supported: Lena Barkley • Motion Carried – Approved Unanimously 	

DRAFT SUBMITTED BY:

Printed Name: Lexus Lenton

Title: Executive Assistant to Stephanie Nixon

Signature: _/s/ Lexus Lenton

Date: 2/4/2026

DATE MINUTES APPROVED/ADOPTED: 3/2/2026 **Initials:** LSL

NEXT MEETING: April 20, 2026