



MINUTES
EWIB VIRTUAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2021
8:00 A.M.

Members Present: Ray Coombs, Jr.; Tony Cronin; Susan Hibbard; Thayne Hutchins, Jr.; Chris Jewell; Travis Monroe; Courtney Murphy; *Tina Rice*; Michael Phelps; Caleb Roseme; Darlene Serra; Chris Bachant; Jeff Beadle; Bill Louis; Pat Feeney; Deborah Monahan; Mary Ellen Jukoski; Marcy Reed; Nancy Cowser; Jessica Corneau; Linda Ladas; & Jim Butler.

Staff Present: Mark Hill, Carol LaBelle, Guy Saporito, & Sheila Taurianen.

Others Present: Jody Lefkowitz, Denise Collins, Kippie Martin, Rob Austin, Bibi Amin, Kevin Cunningham, CT Rep. Holly Cheeseman, Mark Nickerson, CT Rep. Kathleen McCarty, Ayanti Grant, Cyndi Wells, Carol Williams, CT Rep. Brian Smith, Peter DiBiasi, & Karen O'Connell.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jewell called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. He welcomed Ayanti Grant (*U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney's Office*), Rep. Holly Cheeseman (*CT 37th Dist.*), Rep. Kathleen McCarty (*CT 38th Dist.*), CT Rep. Brian Smith (*CT 48th Dist.*), Kevin Cunningham (*Plainfield 1st Sel.*), Peter Nystrom (*Norwich Mayor*), Mark Nickerson (*East Lyme 1st Sel.*), & Carol Williams.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

A **MOTION** was made to accept the minutes of the November 24, 2020 EWIB Board of Directors meeting, as presented (*BUTLER/JUKOSKI*). **ACTION:** Unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

Covered under Chairman/Presidents Report.

CETC/GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL REPORT

Mr. Hill reported that the Council will hold its next [quarterly meeting](#) on January 28, 2021 and that Board members are welcome to attend. He said that the Council will discuss its 19 strategic initiatives and itemize the four work teams designed to develop these initiatives further.

CHAIRMAN/PRESIDENTS REPORT

- **Correspondence** – Mr. Hill reported that EWIB partnered with Norwich Free Academy to provide a *LIVE* pilot demonstration of the Youth Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative (*YMPI*) to the Gawlicki Family Foundation

which was well received. He also shared a post from EWIB's social media account announcing the availability of training opportunities in the Plastics industry via EWIB programs. Mr. Hill commended Board member Ray Coombs and Three Rivers Community College for developing this program.

- **Training and Job Placement Activity:** Mr. Hill noted that Eastern CT unemployment is more than double than when the pandemic began in early 2020. The EWIB team then updated the four initiatives launched to address this issue. First, EWIB has expanded its training program to new trades in the manufacturing and healthcare sectors. Second, EWIB has worked with employers to stimulate hiring in the region. Mr. Hill mentioned that in the past six-months, the MPI program has graduated ten classes and placed 95% of the graduates. Because this success, Mr. Hill added that EWIB will be pursuing an aggressive schedule of classes for the next few months. Third, Mr. Saporito provided an update on *SkillUp CT (the rollout of online training across the state)*. The program was modeled after EWIB's Metrix online training and has enrolled ~24,000 registrants, who have completed ~35,000 courses, spending a total of ~45,000 hours. He stated that this performance compares favorably against other states. Fourth, Mr. Saporito reported on the CARES funding to support training programs for the unemployed. He highlighted that the number of trainees in this program has exceeded the goal by 36% (124 vs 91 trainees) and that 92% of trainees achieved perfect attendance mainly due to the financial assistance (*stipends & support services*) that trainees received while in training. Ms. LaBelle reported that CARES funding has provided financial support in the following categories to program registrants: class stipends (46%), transportation (26%), housing (17%), technology (4%), and other (7%).
- **Financial Audit** – Mr. Saporito provided the Board with an overview of the annual Independent Auditor's Report's process, statement of activities (*income statement*), and statement of financial position (*balance sheet*). The audit was "clean," with no findings, as evident in their opinion. The expenses and revenues were in line with staff's expectations.
- **Procurement** – Ms. LaBelle provided an overview of the upcoming 2021 competitive procurement of services for the American Job Centers-East. This process is conducted every four-years. Services to be procured include case management, business services, technology services, and one-stop operator. Members of the Youth and Performance, Accountability, & Planning Committees will be receiving a memo to advise them of the process & their roles.
- **H1-B Grant** – Mr. Hill informed members that Capital Workforce Partners (*Hartford regional workforce board*) has received a four-year, \$10 million H1-B Grant from USDOL on behalf of all five workforce boards. The grant will fund the duplication of EWIB's MPI program in the IT industry as well as provide for incumbent worker training in manufacturing. EWIB's portion of the grant is expected to be ~\$1.5 million and will be used for the incumbent worker training in manufacturing.

COMMITTEE REPORT

- **Executive Committee** – Chairman Jewell reported that the Committee met on Dec. & Jan. The 12/17/20 meeting was held as a follow-up from the 11/24/30 Board meeting. The Committee reviewed & approved a letter of support in favor of LCO No. 3166, "*An Act Concerning Jobs in and Revenue from the Gaming Industry.*" Chairman Jewell noted that due to the nature of the topic under discussion during the meeting, and the potential for a conflict of interest, Mr. Hutchins did not attend or participate in the meeting. During the 01/21/21 meeting, the group was provided with an overview of EWIB's annual Independent Auditor's Report for the fiscal year ending 06/30/20, and the upcoming 2021 competitive procurement of services for the American Job Center-East. The Committee accepted and recommended the Board's approval of both items. A **MOTION** was made to accept the joint 12/17/20 & 01/21/21 Executive Committee reports, including approving the release of the 2021 Procurement & accepting the FY 19/20 EWIB Audit as presented (*JUKOSKI/HIBBARD*). **ACTION:** Approved, with Monahan abstaining.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

A **MOTION** was made to adjourn the meeting (*MONAHAN/JUKOSKI*). **ACTION:** Unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 a.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted for Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board Secretary James S. Butler by Executive Assistant Sheila R. Taurianen.