



MINUTES

EWIB Board of Directors Hybrid Meeting

Tuesday, January 23, 2024

8:00 a.m.

Members Present: Jeff Beadle; Jim Butler; Ray Coombs, Jr.; Jessica Corneau; Patricia Feeney; Nicole Galo; Thayne Hutchins, Jr.; Chris Jewell; Susan Kocaba; Linda Ladas; William “Bill” Louis; Courtney Murphy; Michael O’Connor; Michael Phelps; Caleb Roseme; & Jessica van der Swaagh.

Staff Present: Michael Nogelo, Guy Saporito, Carol LaBelle, David Allard, & Stephanie Wisniewski.

Others Present: Tony Benoit; Kristin Hempel; David Jarvis; Nancy Knutson; Chris Kueffner; Rep. Tammy Nuccio; Beth Sabila; Denise Spellman; Hillary Thomas; Kelli-Marie Vallieres; Cyndi Wells; Leslie White; Carol Williams; & Steve Wolf.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Chris Jewell called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. and welcomed new Board member Jessica van der Swaagh.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

A **MOTION** was made to accept the minutes of the November 21, 2023 EWIB Board of Directors meeting (**BUTLER/PHELPS**). **Action:** Unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

EWIB President/CEO Michael Nogelo covered the following items:

- **US Department of Labor (US DOL) Acting Sec. Su Visit** – Chair Jewell and EWIB staff will participate in a visit to the EWIB Youth Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative (YMPI) and Youth Healthcare Pipeline Initiative (YHPI) programs at Norwich Free Academy by Acting US DOL Secretary Julie Su on January 26. Congressman Joe Courtney will host the Acting Secretary to highlight these programs.
- **Tourtellotte High School Career Pathways Programs** – EWIB participated in a December 21 tour of Tourtellotte High School career pathway programs, including EWIB-sponsored YHPI and YMPI programs. EWIB will host a virtual follow-up meeting on January 26 to learn more about Tourtellotte’s best practices and lessons learned to help EWIB replicate Tourtellotte’s success in other high schools.
- **Courtney Murphy Profile** – On November 27, the Hartford Business Journal ran a profile of EWIB Board member Courtney Murphy in the Journal’s “2023 Innovators” issue. The article talks about Courtney’s leadership in Electric Boat (EB) hiring more than 5,000 people in 2023 and highlights the MPI as a key component of EB’s workforce development strategy.

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL REPORT

Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS), shared the following recent OWS highlights a) held a statewide Regional Sector Partnership (RSP) Convening on January 11 with a focus on cross collaboration; b) received a grant to enhance the features of the Career ConneCT portal; c) secured funding from The Connecticut Project for a planning grant to explore opportunities to expand CTHires; and d) participated in the Governor's recent launch of jobs.ct.gov.

CHAIR/PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Michael Nogelo covered the following items:

- **Federal Workforce Legislation** – In December, the first step to reauthorize the primary federal workforce development legislation (the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act - WIOA) occurred when the U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce passed the **A Stronger Workforce for America Act**. EWIB and its fellow Connecticut workforce boards have been identifying promising and concerning components of the draft legislation to share with Connecticut's federal congressional delegation. This House committee also passed the **Bipartisan Workforce Pell Act**, which would expand Pell grant eligibility to qualified 8-15-week training programs.
- **MPI Funding** – Fifty-nine MPI cohorts have started since July 1, 2023. If the remainder of the Fiscal Year 2024 schedule stays on track, we will start 94 cohorts during the year, which would represent the region's highest annual number delivered to date. EWIB is optimistic that existing federal, state, and philanthropic funding will be sufficient to hit the target. EWIB submitted a preliminary application to the U.S. Department of Defense Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment (IBAS) program in August for MPI sustainability and expansion funding and awaits an invitation to submit a full application.
- **Staffing Update** – Nicole Shaffer accepted EWIB's Program Quality Assurance Specialist job and started on January 22 to replace Elle Goslin's position, which became vacant in June 2023.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA) RSP** – EAMA RSP Director Tony Benoit reported that he and EAMA RSP companies attended the statewide RSP Convening on January 11. Chief Manufacturing Officer Paul Lavoie facilitated a meeting between EAMA RSP companies and staff from U.S. Senator Chris Murphy's office to urge Senator Murphy to support legislation to reverse a recent change to the tax code that discourages investment in research and development. The Workforce and Outreach working group met on January 17 to discuss hiring, retention, and communication, and a new interactive platform for EAMA RSP members to share best practices.
- **Eastern CT Healthcare Partnership (ECHP)** – David Allard reported that the ECHP Childcare Action Team is aligning with statewide efforts to address the childcare crisis in Eastern CT including the CT Office of Early Childhood Blue Ribbon Panel. The Policy Action Team was invited to a healthcare summit hosted by CT Comptroller Sean Scanlon on January 24. The Healthcare Education, Attraction, & Training (HEAT) Action Team is working to increase the number of healthcare career exploration programs available for area high school students in 2024.
- **Executive Committee** – Chair Jewell reported that the Committee met on January 10 and welcomed new members, Mary Ellen Jukoski and Caleb Roseme. The Board was updated on the following:
 - **Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Audit** – Guy Saporito reviewed EWIB's FY23 Independent Auditor's Report by Doherty, Beals, & Banks, P.C., reporting that the audit contained no findings. For the fiscal year ending 6/30/23, EWIB achieved record revenue of just over \$14.14M, with total expenditures of ~\$14.31M. General and administrative costs declined 1.7% which equated to 4.54% of agency wide expenditures.
 - **New Vision & Mission Statements** – Michael Nogelo reviewed the proposed revisions to EWIB's vision and mission statements that would preserve the spirit of the Board's existing language as previously pledged, while delivering a goal of more clearly and concisely articulating EWIB's strategic direction.

- Proposed vision statement: Every Eastern Connecticut worker has the preparation and opportunities needed to achieve a living-wage career. Every Eastern Connecticut business has the workers needed to thrive.
- Proposed mission statement: Coordinate a regional workforce development system that promotes economic vitality and equitable opportunity by preparing workers for in-demand, quality jobs on career pathways.
- Proposed core values: Partnership, Innovation, Efficiency, Accountability & Continuous Improvement

A **MOTION** was made to accept the 1/10/24 Executive Committee Minutes including approving EWIB's FY23 audit & the new vision & mission statements as presented. **(COOMBS/PHELPS). ACTION:** Unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Board Resolution EWIB-24-01** – Carol LaBelle reviewed EWIB-24-01, a contract with CTDOL utilizing American Rescue Plan Act funding for youth programming 3/1/24-3/21/25.

A **MOTION** was made to approve EWIB's Board Resolution EWIB-24-01 as presented. **(BUTLER/CORNEAU). ACTION:** Unanimously approved.

MEETING SURVEY & ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jewell asked participants to complete a brief online meeting satisfaction survey.

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 a.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted for EWIB Secretary Caleb Roseme by Strategic Executive Assistant Stephanie Wisniewski.