



MINUTES
EWIB VIRTUAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2020
8:00 A.M.

Members Present: Ray Coombs, Jr.; Tony Cronin; Susan Hibbard; Thayne Hutchins, Jr.; Chris Jewell; Deborah Monahan; Courtney Murphy; Michael O'Connor; Michael Phelps; Caleb Roseme; Darlene Serra; Chris Bachant; Jim Butler; Bill Louis; Kelli Vallieres; Mary Ellen Jukoski; Marcy Reed; Linda Ladas; Jessica Corneau; & Nancy Cowser.

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

Others Present: Jody Lefkowitz, Stefanie Montejano, Denise Collins, CT Sen. Cathy Osten, Mark Nickerson, CT Rep. Kevin Ryan, Bibi Amin, Kelly Vachon, Kevin Cunningham, Cyndi Wells, Carol Williams, Denise Spellman, CT Rep. Holly Cheeseman, Ayanti Grant, Peter Nystrom, CT Rep. Brian Smith, & L. Lawrence.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jewell called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. He welcomed Ayanti Grant (*District Director, Office of U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney*), CT Sen. Cathy Osten (*19th Dist.*), Rep. Holly Cheeseman (*37th Dist.*), Rep. Brian Smith (*48th Dist.*), Rep. Kevin Ryan (*139th Dist.*), Mark Nickerson (*East Lyme First Selectman*), Peter Nystrom (*Norwich Mayor*), & Kevin Cunningham (*Plainfield First Selectman*) to the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CT Sen. Cathy Osten requested the Board submit a letter of support for the “*Connecticut Jobs and Revenue Act*” bill that she plans to re-introduce during the upcoming legislative session. She noted the bill would help to stabilize and add employment at the regional casinos and related businesses. The Executive Committee will take this matter up during their next meeting.

ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

A **MOTION** was made to accept the minutes of the September 22, 2020 EWIB Board of Directors meeting, as presented (*BUTLER/JUKOSKI*). **ACTION:** Approved, with Vallieres abstaining.

CORRESPONDENCE

Covered under Chairman/Presidents Report.

CETC/GOVERNOR’S WORKFORCE COUNCIL REPORT

Dr. Kelli Vallieres, Vice Chair of the Governor’s Workforce Council (*GWC*), reported that the Council met on Oct. 8 to review & approve CT’s Strategic Plan. The Plan focuses on four main areas: Business Leadership, Career Building – Education Our Workforce, Equity and Access, and

Accountability and Data-Driven Management. Additionally, industry sector partnerships will be pursued in manufacturing, healthcare, life sciences, and information & technology.

CHAIRMAN/PRESIDENTS REPORT

- **Electric Boat Letter** – Chairman Jewell reported that he was copied on a letter from General Dynamics/Electric Boat (GD/EB) President Kevin Graney. He shared sections of the letter, which was complimentary to EWIB and its Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative (MPI), “. . . *the pipeline has trained thousands of applicants with a solid foundation in basic manufacturing skills, preparing them to become the next generation of shipbuilders . . .*” “. . . *the pipeline has ensured successive generations will feel pride for the honorable work they do and the skills they master. The program is known nationally and recognized as the gold standard of job training.*”
- **Program Update Presentation** – Mr. Hill reported two recent news headlines that reflect impressive accomplishments from regional businesses. One, Pfizer announced that its late-stage COVID-19 clinical trials was showing “*more than 90%*” efficacy. Two, General Dynamics’ Electric Boat Division (EB) announced it was awarded a \$9.5 Billion contract with the U.S. Navy for the Columbia-class program to be built in Connecticut and Rhode Island. He noted that the EB announcement is anticipated to result in the need for thousands of workers over the next decade, a significant workforce opportunity.

Mr. Hill reported the region’s unemployment has approximately doubled from pre-pandemic levels, and this has become a key focus of the workforce efforts. He outlined four initiatives recently launched by EWIB and its partners to address this issue. First, the team has executed the CARES funding which provides training opportunities for jobseekers in manufacturing, healthcare, and other industries. EWIB anticipates the number served in this program will far exceed the goals. Final results will be available after December 30, which marks the program end date. Second, EWIB and other state workforce boards have implemented the *SkillUp CT* program to provide access to jobseekers for 5,000+ on-line training courses. Since the roll-out in May, the program has resulted in 22,187 registrants across the state. Third, EWIB has launched an On-the-Job training program to incentivize employers to hire. The program has been well received and resulted in 50 hires since its September start date. Finally, EWIB and its partners recently launched training classes in new job functions to expand opportunities for jobseekers in manufacturing and healthcare. Training opportunities in *Plastics and Planning (manufacturing)* and *Pharmacy Technicians and Personal Care Aides (healthcare)* will support our region’s jobseekers in their efforts to gain new skills

Carol LaBelle, EWIB Sr. Dir. of Programs and Special Projects, informed the Board that the federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the American Job Centers to have an independent & objective evaluation completed every 2-years. The evaluation criteria include service integration, accountability, access, partnership, continuous improvement, and its alignment with the broader regional economic strategy. The Board will be asked to approve a resolution to authorize submission of the application for One-Stop certification later in the agenda.

COMMITTEE REPORT

- **Nominating Committee** – Committee Chairman Susan Hibbard provided the Nominating Committee Report, which put forth the following slate of Officers:

CHAIRMAN:	Christopher Jewell
VICE-CHAIR:	Thayne Hutchins, Jr.
SECRETARY:	James S. Butler
TREASURER:	Michael Phelps

A **MOTION** was made to approve the 2020 EWIB Slate of Officers, as presented (**MONAHAN/O’CONNOR**).
ACTION: Approved with Vallieres abstaining.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

- **EWIB Board Resolution EWIB-20-02** – A **MOTION** was made to authorize EWIB Chairman (*Christopher R. Jewell*) and President/CEO (*Mark Hill*) to submit the Application for One-Stop Certification for the

Danielson, Montville, and Willimantic American Job Centers to CTDOL (*BUTLER/HIBBARD*). **ACTION:** Approved, with Vallieres abstaining.

- **Conflict of Interest Statements** – Board members are asked to complete & return their Conflict of Interest Statements to Sheila Taurianen (taurianens@ewib.org) by the close of business December 4.

ADJOURNMENT

A **MOTION** was made to adjourn the meeting (*MONAHAN/HIBBARD*). **ACTION:** Approved, with Vallieres abstaining.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 a.m.

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