



MINUTES

EWIB Board of Directors Hybrid Meeting

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

8:00 a.m.

Members Present: Ray Coombs, Jr.; Jessica Corneau; Ginger Frasca; Nicole Galo; Thayne Hutchins; David Jarvis; Chris Jewell; Mary Ellen Jukoski; Linda Ladas; Liz Li; Daniel Mello; Michael Phelps; Eric Protulis; Caleb Roseme & Jessica van der Swaagh.

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

Others Present: Dave Bechtel; Tony Benoit; Kevin Cunningham; Kristin Hempel; Nancy Knutson; Erin McBride; Yamarie Perez; Denise Spellman; Grace Suh; & Cyndi Wells.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Chris Jewell called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

A **MOTION** was made to accept the minutes of the March 25, 2025 EWIB Board of Directors meeting (**COOMBS/LADAS**).

Action: Unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

EWIB President/CEO Michael Nogelo highlighted the following items:

- **Yale Innovation Summit Panel** – Mr. Nogelo represented EWIB on a panel on workforce development innovation at the Yale Innovation Summit in May. EWIB was invited based on its history of leadership and innovation. Approximately 100 students, investors, philanthropists, and policymakers, among others, attended.
- **Youth Healthcare Pipeline Initiative (YHPI) Article** – In April, The Day ran an article about the new YHPI program at Killingly High School. The Westview Health Care Center Director of Staff Education taught the YHPI Certified Nursing Assistant course at the high school. The program has generated great interest among students.
- **Workforce Advocacy Day** – Mr. Nogelo participated in the National Association of Workforce Boards' Workforce Advocacy Day on April 2 in Washington, D.C., speaking with staff from the offices of Sen. Richard Blumenthal, Sen. Chris Murphy, Rep. Joe Courtney, Rep. Rosa DeLauro, and Rep. Jahana Hayes about federal funding and legislation.
- **DEEP Seasonal Employment Program Graduation** – EWIB Senior Director of Programs and Special Projects Carol LaBelle spoke about the regional CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) seasonal employment program that EWIB and its American Job Center (AJC) partners implemented. EWIB and AJC leaders joined the DEEP Commissioner and others at the graduation ceremony at the Montville AJC on March 20.

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GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL (GWC)/OFFICE OF WORKFORCE STRATEGY (OWS) REPORT

- OWS Chief of Staff Grace Suh shared the following OWS highlights: a) The legislative session resulted in a Workforce Innovation and Sustainability Fund that includes \$30 million in bond funding to be disbursed by OWS and an advisory board and a \$5 million Career Accelerator bond fund; an integrated workforce data bill that requires workforce boards to report data to P20 WIN; and a bill that establishes the Clean Economy Council in statute; b) In April, OWS released the State's new Workforce Strategic Plan, which focuses on driving growth, building skills, and expanding access; and c) More than 500 people attended the Workforce Summit on April 22.

CHAIR'S/PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- **State Biennial Budget** – Mr. Nogelo reported that the state biennial budget passed on June 4. EWIB's Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative (MPI) received flat funding at \$4.6 million per year and the CT Youth Employment Program (CYEP) received \$7.8 million for FY26 and \$10.3 million for FY27. Sen. Cathy Osten and Rep. Derell Wilson were among many strong advocates for the CYEP.
- **Connecticut Project Grant** – Mr. Nogelo said the CT Project has committed approximately \$128,000 to EWIB in FY26 for EWIB to coordinate implementation of a Youth Early Childhood Education (ECE) Pipeline Initiative pilot program at three high schools. CT Project anticipates funding expansion of the program in the subsequent two years. The project will adapt EWIB's youth industry pipeline model to the ECE sector, preparing students to earn a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and promoting pathways to higher-wage careers.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **EWIB Executive Committee** – EWIB staff members reported on several items discussed and approved by the Executive Committee:
 - Ms. LaBelle reported that the Executive Committee approved the recommendation of the EWIB Youth Committee to select EASTCONN's proposal to lead EWIB's WIOA In-School Youth Program (COOL Directions Career Pathway and Youth Talent Pipelines) and Out-of-School Youth Program. EWIB staff will negotiate a contract with EASTCONN to commence on July 1.
 - EWIB Chief Financial and Administrative Officer Guy Saporito reported that EWIB completed its financial compliance and monitoring of its Good Jobs Challenge grant sub-recipient, ReadyCT. The monitoring report contained financial and compliance issues, all of which have been resolved or are pending resolution.
 - Mr. Saporito stated that the Executive Committee approved EWIB's FY26 Cost Allocation Plan, which has no changes to the previously approved FY25 plan.
 - Mr. Saporito provided an overview of the status of the current fiscal year's budget, noting that overall expenditures are projected to come in under budget. Major under expenditures in salaries and fringe are a result of decisions to not hire a budgeted finance position and to not fill the Executive Assistant vacancy due to funding uncertainty. Under expenditures in supplies and professional services resulted from the utilization of supplemental funding received to address IT improvements and enhancements.
 - Mr. Nogelo shared a recap of EWIB's FY25 performance, highlighting activities including: a) achievement of AJC program performance benchmarks; b) manufacturing and healthcare adult pipeline training; c) manufacturing and healthcare regional sector partnership (RSP) efforts to address employer priorities; and d) expansion of youth industry pipeline programs.
 - Mr. Nogelo reviewed EWIB's projected FY26 revenue availability, forecasted at ~\$16.2 million. Expenditures of large portions of multi-year awards led to a year-over-year decrease in revenue availability.
 - Mr. Nogelo reported that the Executive Committee approved Board Resolutions EWIB-25-01 through EWIB-25-08. Most resolutions are contracts for recurring funding and one resolution authorizes the Executive Committee to approve new contracts on behalf of the Board during the Board's summer recess.
 - Mr. Nogelo shared EWIB's goals and objectives for FY26, which the Executive Committee approved.

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- Mr. Nogelo reviewed EWIB's FY26 operating budget that was approved by the Executive Committee. The budget reflects a decrease of 1.71% from the FY25 budget. The staff salaries line reflects adjustments resulting from in-process succession planning and filling the Executive Assistant vacancy. The budget includes a slight increase in the professional development line and funding for grant writing support.

Chair Jewell stated that the FY26 operating budget reflects the current funding environment and is consistent with EWIB's tradition as a responsible and efficient steward of public funds.

A **MOTION** was made to accept the May 22, 2025 EWIB Executive Committee report, as presented (**JUKOSKI/LI**). **Action:** Unanimously approved with one abstention (Protulis).

- **Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA) RSP** – EAMA RSP Director Tony Benoit reported that: a) EAMA RSP working groups have planned in-person, peer-to-peer learning and networking events in June, July, and August focused on business-to-business, youth outreach, and safety; b) A survey will gauge members' strategic priorities for EAMA RSP and the value of EAMA RSP to members; c) Survey results will inform an August EAMA RSP Steering Committee strategic planning retreat in August; and d) The EAMA RSP Annual Meeting and networking event in October will feature Comptroller Sean Scanlon as the keynote speaker.

Chair Jewell stated that the Steering Committee will focus on ensuring that EAMA RSP provides value to its several smaller members. Daniel Mello reported that Grasso Tech was recognized at the recent Electric Boat (EB) High School Signing Day for having the most graduates of any Connecticut high school going to work at EB.

- **Eastern CT Healthcare Partnership (ECHP)** – Dave Bechtel reported that: a) The full partnership held a hybrid meeting on June 5 where several wellness experts presented low-cost opportunities to promote employee safety and wellness, and EWIB and Futuro Health presented a variety of training opportunities for employers; b) The ECHP Policy Team collaborated with the other three Connecticut healthcare RSPs on an op-ed that was published in CT Insider and on a legislative breakfast held in May.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Ray Coombs suggested that EWIB consider organizing meetings and events to ensure that state and local elected officials are aware of the important work EWIB does and can advocate for regional workforce development priorities.

MEETING SURVEY & ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jewell asked participants to complete a brief online meeting satisfaction survey. The next Board meeting will be held September 23, 2025.

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 a.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted for EWIB Secretary Caleb Roseme by David Allard.

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