



MINUTES

EWIB Board of Directors Hybrid Meeting

Tuesday, June 9th, 2026

8:00 a.m.

Members Present: Thomas Abate; Susan Adams; Peter Baker; Nereida Braash; Ray Coombs; Jessica Corneau; Thayne Hutchins; Chris Jewell; David Jarvis; Susan Kocaba; Linda Ladas; Liz Li; William Louis; Courtney Murphy; Eric Protulis; Caleb Roseme; & Dina Sears-Graves

Staff Present: David Allard; Melissa Laws; Carol LaBelle; Alexandra Moscaritolo; Guy Saporito

Others Present: Tony Benoit; Bowen Peard; 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 March 31, 2026, EWIB Board of Directors meeting (*JARVIS/ABATE*).

ACTION: Unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chair Jewell informed the Board that President/CEO Michael Nogelo has resigned from EWIB. He noted that Director of Operations David Allard is serving as Interim President/CEO, and he will be supported by Special Advisor to the Board, John Beauregard, Program Advisor Carol LaBelle, and Chief Financial and Administrative, Officer Guy Saporito, to ensure continuity of leadership and administration during the interim period. Chair Jewell reported that the Board will undertake a leadership transition process over the coming months and that funding has been maintained within the FY27 budget to provide flexibility as future leadership needs are evaluated.

Interim President/CEO of EWIB David Allard highlighted the following correspondence items:

- **Ossen Family Foundation Grant Award** – EWIB received a \$75,000 grant from the Ossen Family Foundation to sustain the Youth Healthcare Pipeline Initiative (YHPI), continuing a longstanding partnership supporting youth and adult workforce initiatives.
- **Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative (MPI) Funding Increase** – The FY27 state budget included an additional \$2 million for MPI, enhancing the program's ability to meet increased employer demand.

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL (GWC)/OWS REPORT

Chief Workforce Officer Kelli-Marie Vallieres provided updates on the following:

- **Career ConneCT** – Program activities conclude June 30, with evaluation and closeout activities continuing through the end of the year. Ownership of the Career ConneCT Portal will transition from EWIB to OWS on

July 1 as development continues on future enhancements. Ms. Vallieres thanked EWIB for its leadership of the CareerConnect portal and acknowledged the organization's contributions to statewide implementation.

- **Regional Sector Partnerships** – OWS is developing strategies and funding opportunities to support Regional Sector Partnerships following the conclusion of the Good Jobs Challenge grant.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Initiative** – OWS is pursuing a federal AI Regional Sector Partnership grant focused on workforce upskilling, employer engagement, and supporting AI adoption among manufacturers.
- **Career Pathways Commission** – Ongoing work continues to identify sustainable funding and policy recommendations to support career pathway programs statewide.
- **Maritime Workforce Development** – OWS continues efforts to expand and standardize maritime workforce training and develop a digital credentialing framework.

CHAIR/PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mr. David Allard provided an overview of EWIB's FY26 performance and strategic accomplishments.

- **Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative (MPI)** – Mr. Allard reported record activity during the first half of 2026, with significant growth in training enrollment and employment placements. He highlighted strong collaboration among workforce partners and employers to meet increasing demand and support participant success.

Board Member Courtney Murphy noted ongoing collaboration between Electric Boat and EWIB to improve training enrollment and participant placement outcomes.

- **Youth Healthcare Pipeline Initiative (YHPI)** – YHPI continues to expand and now serves 13 partner schools throughout the region. Discussion focused on sustainability efforts as Good Jobs Challenge funding concludes, including school district investments, philanthropic support, and exploration of additional funding sources. Ms. Vallieres noted that the Career Pathways Commission is evaluating long-term funding strategies for career pathway programs statewide.

Board member Caleb Roseme provided additional context regarding healthcare training requirements and employer participation in clinical placements.

- **Connecticut Youth Employment Program (CYEP)** – Mr. Allard reported that adoption of a new data-driven funding formula and increased state funding will significantly expand youth employment opportunities in Eastern Connecticut. Approximately 675 youth are expected to participate this summer.
- **Local Workforce Development Plan Modification** – EWIB completed a required mid-cycle update to its Local Workforce Development Plan. The draft plan has been posted for public comment and distributed to required partners.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chief Financial Officer Guy Saporito presented the Executive Committee Report.

- **Cost Allocation Plan** – The Executive Committee approved revisions to EWIB's Cost Allocation Plan to improve administrative efficiency while maintaining compliance with federal requirements.
- **Retirement Longevity Recognition Policy** – The Executive Committee approved a policy recognizing employees with 25 or more years of service upon retirement, honoring their dedication and long-term contributions.
- **FY26 Budget Update** – FY26 expenditures are projected to finish approximately 6% under budget, primarily due to personnel and professional services savings, allowing additional resources to be redirected toward workforce programs and Board priorities.
- **FY27 Budget Outlook** – Despite reductions in certain federal grants, increased state funding, including additional Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative funding, is expected to offset most revenue losses. The proposed FY27 budget remains stable and includes funding for the President/CEO position throughout the fiscal year to provide flexibility during the leadership transition.

Chair Jewell acknowledged the State's continued investment in workforce development initiatives throughout Eastern Connecticut.

A **MOTION** was made to approve the Executive Committee reports as presented (**COOMBS/JARVIS**). **ACTION:** Approved. (Abstention: Abate)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA) Regional Sector Partnership- EAMA RSP Director Tony Benoit reported: a.) membership continues to grow, with several new companies joining the partnership; b.) a Business-to-Business networking event was held at the UConn School of Engineering Innovation Shop; c.) a Workforce Committee Lunch & Learn is scheduled for June 13 and has generated strong employer interest; d.) Youth Outreach activities included a visit to Parish Hill High School, while Defense Industry Community Partnership activities continue to support regional workforce and industry needs; e.) legislation expanding eligibility for Connecticut's Research and Development (R&D) Tax Credit to pass-through entities was approved and signed into law; f.) planning is underway for the annual Strategic Planning Session and Annual Meeting. Members were encouraged to complete the annual employer survey to help guide future priorities.

Eastern Connecticut Healthcare Partnership (ECHP) - David Allard reported on behalf of ECHP Coordinator Dave Bechtel that: a) the partnership continues to focus on attracting future healthcare workers and supporting incumbent worker development; b.) healthcare employers expressed strong interest in the new Industry-Driven Skills Training Grant and related workforce training opportunities; c.) the Healthcare Career Expo held in Norwich was well attended; e.) the Healthcare Education, Attraction, and Training (HEAT) Committee is planning future career exploration activities and expanded healthcare opportunities through the Connecticut Youth Employment Program; f.) new healthcare career awareness videos are being developed to promote healthcare occupations and pathways to job seekers throughout the region.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. David Allard presented EWIB Resolutions 26-01 through 26-09, including contracts and funding authorizations related to WIOA programs, Jobs First Employment Services, the Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative, youth employment programs, contract execution authority during the Board recess period, and submission of the WIOA Local Plan modification.

A **MOTION** was made to approve EWIB Resolutions 26-01 through 26-09 as presented (**COOMBS/ROSEME**). **ACTION:** Approved. (Abstention: Abate)

Chair Jewell announced plans for a special in-person Board meeting on September 22, 2026, recognizing the success of the Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative 10-year anniversary. Additional details will be provided during the summer.

ADJOURNMENT

The next Board meeting will be held on September 22nd, 2026

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 am.

Our Core Values: Partnership - Innovation - Accountability - Efficiency - Continuous Improvement

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted for EWIB Secretary Caleb Roseme by Programs and Executive Support Specialist Alexandra Moscaritolo.