

**STATE OF NEVADA
GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

CHILDCARE SUBCOMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 14, 2024 - 2:00 p.m.

Teleconference Line: 1 669 900 6833

Meeting ID: 861 5117 9308

Passcode: 477070

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present: Susan Brager (Chair), Scott Black, Leslie Mujica, Karissa Loper Machado, Robert Benner, Bob Finch, Brittany Brown, Irene Bustamante Adams, Ken Evans, Maureen Schafer, Marilyn Kirkpatrick, Tiffany Tyler-Garner, Gina Bongiovi

Absent:

Also present: Katie Gilbertson, Alex Goff, Patty West, Kim Jadidi, Scott Hammond

1. CALL TO ORDER - OPENING REMARKS

Chair Brager, called the meeting to order and welcomed participants.

2. ROLL CALL - CONFIRMATION OF A QUORUM

Katie Gilbertson, OWINN, took roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

3. VERIFICATION OF PUBLIC NOTICE POSTING

Katie Gilbertson verified that the meeting had been publicly posted pursuant to Nevada Open Meeting Law, NRS 241.020.

Chair Brager expressed the importance of the committee and the need for everyone to have a chance to speak. She emphasized the significance of the committee's work, stating that it cannot be left on a shelf and that it's crucial for providing direction and new business ideas. Chair Brager highlighted the importance of addressing issues such as childcare, expressing passion for ensuring that everyone has access to opportunities to work and feel good about themselves. She emphasized the need to address financial barriers preventing people from working and stressed the importance of making all individuals viable in the workforce.

4. FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

Chair Brager opened the first period of public comments.

Alex Goff, from Senator Jackie Rosen's office, introduced himself, and said he was looking forward to the meeting.

5. DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ONLY – Welcome and Subcommittee goals for 2024

Chair Brager expressed gratitude to those committed to the cause, emphasizing its importance for the entire state. She urged for unity, highlighting the need to dissolve the division between North and South. Chair Brager outlined the group's goals of improving childcare and facilitating workforce participation, stressing the importance of concise presentations and productive discussions. She expressed her preference for efficiency and readiness for the upcoming legislative session, aiming to

present compelling facts to drive progress. Chair Brager acknowledged the presence of OWINN Director Scott Hammond, emphasizing collaboration for success in the coming year.

Scott Hammond, Director, OWINN emphasized the interconnectedness between the workforce and the childcare system, highlighting the importance of a robust childcare system to support workforce development. He expressed his commitment to assisting in this endeavor and thanked the group for the opportunity to contribute.

Chair Brager invited the Subcommittee members to introduce themselves.

Commissioner Marilyn Kirpatrick introduced herself and expressed the importance of childcare on the workforce.

Councilman Scott Black from the City of North Las Vegas City Council introduced himself and agreed about the need for adequate and high level childcare in our community.

Maureen Schafer expressed support for Chair Brager's leadership and optimism about the group's success. She echoed Chair Brager's sentiments about unity across the state, emphasizing that all children belong to everyone. Ms. Schafer highlighted the importance of the intersection between workforce development and childcare, considering it timely and relevant. She expressed gratitude for the opportunity to contribute to improving outcomes for children and families.

Dr. Tiffany Tyler Garner introduced herself and expressed her honor to attend the meeting.

Brittany Brown, Senior Director of Recruitment for Renown in Northern Nevada, introduced herself, and expressed her passion for improving the state's workforce through childcare.

Leslie Mujica, Planning Commissioner, introduced herself and mentioned the importance of childcare on the labor world.

Rob Benner, representing the Northern Nevada building and construction trades Council and the Northern Nevada central labor Council, highlighted the significant challenges that childcare presents in recruiting individuals into the construction trades. He emphasized the barrier it poses for women and single fathers, particularly in industries with early start times like construction. Mr. Benner expressed a desire to find effective solutions to address these challenges and improve access to childcare for workers in the construction industry.

Bob Finch, the Chief Operating Officer for Redrock resorts in Las Vegas, echoed Mr. Benner's sentiments regarding the challenges of childcare in the workforce. He emphasized the difficulties faced by businesses, especially those operating 24/7, in providing daycare options for their team members. Mr. Finch expressed support for finding affordable solutions to address these challenges and underscored the importance of childcare for attracting and retaining employees, particularly in industries like hospitality.

Irene Bustamante Adams, the deputy director for the local workforce board Workforce Connections. Firstly, she mentioned the integration of childcare staff within American Job Centers, which serves clients visiting career hubs. This integration aims to support individuals seeking employment by addressing childcare needs. Secondly, Ms. Bustamante Adams discussed an initiative to explore bringing childcare funds into workforce development efforts. She noted a presentation from Texas on this topic to the Governor's Workforce Development Board, highlighting the recognition of childcare as essential for economic success and the need to address it within workforce strategies.

6. **DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ONLY – CARE Funding Presentation and Discussion**

Chair Brager acknowledged Karissa Loper Machado, the agency manager for the child care and development program within the Department of Health and Human Services, to present on childcare funding. She emphasized the importance of discussion following the presentation to progress efficiently. Chair Brager thanked Ms. Loper-Machado for her efforts in providing an overview, highlighting the significance of labor and hotel representation in addressing industry needs, particularly in accommodating early work hours.

Karissa Loper Machado introduced herself as Agency Manager for the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services overseeing childcare and development programming within the Department of Health and Human Services. She provided an overview of the childcare landscape in Nevada, highlighting the state's status as a childcare desert with a shortage of licensed childcare slots. Ms. Loper-Machado emphasized the high cost of childcare and the limitations of federal childcare subsidy eligibility criteria. She discussed the efforts to increase access and affordability through federal pandemic relief funds, noting the need for sustainability beyond the funding sunset dates.

Ms. Loper-Machado detailed the program's focus on administering subsidy benefits, collaborating with the Nevada Department of Education to improve childcare quality, and operating the childcare licensing program. She explained the eligibility criteria for receiving childcare subsidies and the process of setting subsidy rates based on market rate surveys and cost modeling studies. Ms. Loper-Machado emphasized the importance of parental choice in selecting childcare providers and acknowledged the challenges in finding available slots, particularly in areas with supply shortages.

Furthermore, Ms. Loper-Machado highlighted the importance of early childhood education in supporting workforce participation and economic growth. She presented a breakdown of pandemic relief and recovery funds allocation across various projects aimed at assisting families, supporting childcare providers, and increasing childcare supply. Ms. Loper-Machado emphasized ongoing efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of these projects and ensure responsible fund utilization within the allocated timeline. Ms. Loper-Machado provided an overview of the remaining funds and assured that efforts were in place to spend them effectively before the specified deadline.

Marilyn Kirkpatrick inquired about accessing the grants discussed, expressing a desire to ensure they were not restricted by zip code and could be accessed by anyone in need. She mentioned observing children with special needs and the challenges associated with non-traditional hours.

Karissa Loper Machado explained that the grants were not zip code-specific and were accessible to all. She clarified that they primarily came from block grants and suggested looking into Nevada's Department of Health and Human Services for more information on accessing them. She provided information on accessing the grants through NevadaChildcare.org. She explained that childcare providers could visit the website and indicate their status as providers to access the available grants. Ms. Loper-Machado specified that grants for non-traditional hours slots and children with special healthcare needs were still open for applications. She mentioned additional resources such as the Las Vegas Urban League, the Children's Cabinet, and her staff within the childcare development program for assistance in accessing these grants.

Marilyn Kirkpatrick mentioned that after COVID-19, Clark County allocated funds to chambers of commerce to encourage childcare providers to join. This initiative aimed to provide providers with access to resources such as healthcare options for their employees. Ms. Kirkpatrick expressed her intention to add this information to the list for the chamber to share with current providers.

Karissa Loper Machado expressed gratitude for Ms. Kirkpatrick 's suggestion and welcomed any assistance in spreading the word about available resources to current childcare providers. She mentioned that they have been actively sharing information through various channels such as childcare licensing listservs, monthly webinars, and direct communication with providers who receive subsidy funds. Ms. Loper-Machado acknowledged the challenges providers face in completing paperwork and mentioned that program specialists are available to help them with this

process. She clarified that subsidy certificate case load increases are not grants open to everyone but rather a means to serve more eligible families. Ms. Loper-Machado explained the partnerships involved in administering special projects, such as the Nevada Strong Start Childcare Services Centers, the Nevada After School Network, and others. She highlighted that a significant portion of the funding is allocated to supporting childcare providers and their staff, particularly through operating and stabilization grants. However, she noted that these grants had sunsetted, and efforts were underway at the national level to secure similar grants in the future. Ms. Loper-Machado emphasized the importance of providing support to childcare providers to help them start and maintain their businesses successfully.

Scott Hammond expressed appreciation for the information provided, particularly regarding the allocation of federal dollars to operating and stabilization grants. He highlighted the importance of understanding how many providers received the grants and their current operational status. Mr. Hammond emphasized the need to assess the effectiveness of the grants by determining how many providers were still operating after receiving the funds. He suggested that knowing the number of providers and their outcomes would be beneficial for future planning, such as determining the need for additional providers.

Karissa Loper Machado responded to Mr. Hammond's inquiry by providing information on the number of providers who received stabilization grants. She stated that a total of 719 providers received these grants, categorized by county and provider type. Ms. Loper-Machado mentioned that she could obtain specific information on how many of these providers were still operating. She noted that Nevada had seen a recovery in the number of licensed providers operating post-pandemic compared to pre-pandemic levels, indicating an increase in licensed providers currently compared to 2020.

Chair Brager asked Commissioner Kirkpatrick if there was a feasible way to identify childcare facilities that were no longer in operation without burdening anyone with excessive work. She suggested that such information could help identify potential pilot locations for childcare services, particularly if there were existing structures available.

Leslie Mujica expressed her confusion regarding the annual budget allocation for grants and whether it was sufficient to meet the needs of the childcare sector. She questioned whether a set budget amount was distributed in grants annually, and if so, whether any funds remained unused. Ms. Mujica also raised concerns about the adequacy of the allocated funds in addressing the significant need for childcare services. She hoped for clarity on whether the current funding approach was effective in meeting the demands or if there were opportunities for improvement.

Karissa Loper Machado clarified that the funding received during the pandemic, particularly the operating and stabilization grants, was not typical of the annual budget allocation under the childcare and development block grant. She explained that the operating and stabilization grants were specifically provided through the American Rescue Plan Act to stabilize the childcare industry during the pandemic. Ms. Loper-Machado noted that the regular block grant amount was approximately \$93 million, with 70% of it dedicated to providing subsidy assistance to eligible children, rather than directly stabilizing childcare provider operations.

Leslie Mujica rephrased her question by seeking clarification on how much money was used to aid 719 businesses as shown on slide 17.

Karissa Loper Machado replied with \$216 million. She indicated that information was reflected on slide 18.

Marilyn Kirkpatrick shared some insights into the context surrounding the funding allocation during the pandemic. She highlighted the necessity for childcare facilities to undergo upgrades to meet health and safety standards for admitting children during the pandemic. Ms. Kirkpatrick also

noted that many childcare providers were struggling with overdue payments, which were compensated for, allowing them to continue operating. She suggested that maintaining a similar support program could extend assistance to even more people. Ms. Kirkpatrick emphasized the importance of local governments offering support by waiving certain building costs and permits, which were initially expensive for many providers. She commended Ms. Loper-Machado and her team for their effective and prompt action in distributing funds during challenging times, despite the escalating costs.

Chair Brager expressed appreciation for Ms. Kirkpatrick's historical knowledge and highlighted the importance of understanding past actions and decisions. She emphasized that each member of the committee was chosen for specific reasons, including their expertise and experience. Chair Brager emphasized the need for thorough preparation and concise discussions, especially as they aimed to present well-informed proposals to the legislature in 2025.

Scott Hammond emphasized the importance of understanding the outcomes and return on investment of the funds allocated for stabilization efforts in the child care industry. He echoed Ms. Kirkpatrick's sentiment, stressing the need for Ms. Loper-Machado to provide detailed information about the impact of the funds spent. Mr. Hammond highlighted the correlation between child care availability and workforce development, underscoring the significance of telling a compelling story to garner further support and resources. He encouraged Ms. Loper-Machado to share specifics about facility upgrades and how the funds were utilized to address pandemic-related requirements. Mr. Hammond reiterated the committee's interest in gathering comprehensive data to inform future decisions and funding requests.

Chair Brager highlighted the ultimate goal of creating pilot programs, utilizing existing buildings such as former daycare centers or vacant commercial spaces to address the need for child care facilities. She emphasized the importance of demonstrating tangible results to the legislature by showcasing successful pilot programs that effectively address the child care shortage. Chair Brager suggested that municipalities could consider waiving certain requirements or providing support to facilitate the establishment of these pilot programs, ultimately aiming to enable more individuals to access child care services and join the workforce.

Karissa Loper Machado provided detailed information about the efforts made to support childcare providers and increase supply in the childcare industry. She highlighted initiatives such as the Nevada Strong Start Child Care Services Centers, which serve as resource hubs for individuals interested in starting or improving a childcare business. These centers offer various resources, including training, quality improvement support, networking opportunities, and financial assistance. Ms. Loper-Machado also mentioned partnerships with organizations like Mission Driven Finance to address housing affordability barriers and Optima Health to provide healthcare coverage for childcare workers. Additionally, efforts are underway to help childcare providers develop their business skills and access capital to sustain their operations. Ms. Loper-Machado emphasized that these multifaceted initiatives aim to expand childcare options and support the workforce by providing reliable and high-quality childcare services.

Leslie Mujica asked for clarification about the \$19 million attributed to the Las Vegas Urban League. Specifically, Ms. Mujica sought to understand if this amount represents an annual allocation, funding throughout the project duration, or designated for childcare.

Karissa Loper Machado clarified that the \$19 million allocated to the Las Vegas Urban League represents a total sum distributed across State fiscal years 2022 and 2023. This funding, categorized under the operating stabilization grants, was channeled through the Urban League for distribution to individual childcare providers.

Leslie Mujica asked if it was known how many businesses were helped with the \$19 million.

Karissa Loper Machado demonstrated those data were on slides 17 and 18. 485 Clark County businesses were assisted by Urban League and Children’s Cabinet. She stated Children’s Cabinet assisted providers across the State.

Marilyn Kirkpatrick shared it was difficult to reach the Urban League in Southern Nevada. The State had the Children’s Cabinet assist Clark County since Urban League did not have sufficient staffing.

Chair Brager expressed gratitude for the comprehensive report and emphasized the importance of understanding the breakdown of all funds. She suggested focusing on what the subcommittee members need for the next meeting, considering the quarterly schedule and everyone's busy schedules.

7. **DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ONLY – New Business from Subcommittee Members and Next Steps**

Irene Bustamante Adams expressed gratitude towards Chair Brager and highlighted Ms. Loper-Machado’s recommendations from the previous legislative session, particularly the strategic move of relocating licensing under her jurisdiction. Ms. Bustamante Adams then expressed interest in Ms. Loper-Machado’s thoughts on the next steps to make progress in the childcare sector, emphasizing the need for effective strategies in the upcoming legislative session.

Karissa Loper Machado outlined several key recommendations for the next legislative session, which she had discussed with multiple senators. These include addressing barriers related to housing for childcare providers, exploring tax credit options for businesses to subsidize childcare, investing in capital construction funds for childcare facilities, addressing local municipal codes that hinder childcare providers, and focusing on improving wages for the childcare workforce. She emphasized the interconnectedness of these issues and their significance in advancing childcare accessibility and quality in Nevada.

Marilyn Kirkpatrick highlighted the challenges posed by certain state licensing requirements for childcare providers and suggested exploring potential revisions to these requirements. She proposed compiling a list of specific regulations that could be reevaluated or adjusted to better align with practical considerations and reduce unnecessary burdens on providers. Ms. Kirkpatrick emphasized the importance of ensuring that state regulations are reasonable and feasible, especially in light of efforts at the local level to address zoning and permit issues. She suggested that, there may be opportunities to waive or modify certain requirements to better reflect real-world circumstances and promote accessibility in childcare provision.

Karissa Loper Machado expressed willingness to examine the regulations highlighted by Ms. Kirkpatrick and acknowledged the importance of addressing barriers faced by childcare providers. She mentioned that some local requirements, such as square footage regulations, might be more restrictive than state-level regulations. Ms. Loper Machado emphasized the need to balance federal requirements necessary for funding with the flexibility to amend regulations where possible to better support childcare providers. She committed to reviewing any list of regulations that may be impeding childcare provision and determining whether amendments could be made to alleviate these barriers.

Marilyn Kirkpatrick shared the local community centers are at full capacity and that she wants to have more children at the facilities. Ms. Kirkpatrick recommended a list of waiver requests to be recirculated as she knew that list existed before. Ms. Kirkpatrick also mentioned there are no vacant buildings that could potentially be used for childcare since they are all being turned into memory care facilities or homeless shelters. She expressed excitement to help and the need for both the State and local side to streamline the process.

Ken Evans expressed gratitude to everyone present at the meeting and emphasized the importance

of producing results, particularly in preparing policy and governance recommendations for the upcoming legislative session. He highlighted the focus on regional daycare demonstration pilots within the childcare working group as an area of priority. Mr. Evans expressed confidence in making significant progress and impact moving forward.

Chair Brager is seeking suggestions from participants, particularly Dr. Tyler-Garner, on ways to help the city expand their efforts in addressing juvenile justice issues. The aim is to provide support and assistance before the legislative session, emphasizing the desire to move forward effectively.

Tiffany Tyler Garner expresses willingness to offer assistance and suggests exploring ways to complement and expand existing efforts. She highlighted initiatives such as the mobile strong start program and plans to expand workforce development efforts, offering training in various locations. Dr. Tyler-Garner suggested exploring opportunities to integrate childcare training with existing programs to further enhance the effort.

8. SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

Chair Brager opened the second period of public comments. There were none.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The February 14, 2024 meeting was adjourned.

Notice of this meeting was posted on or before 9 a.m. on the third day prior to the meeting at the Grant Sawyer State Building 1st Floor Lobby at 555 E. Washington Ave. Las Vegas, NV 89101. GOWINN's Public Meetings website <https://gowinn.nv.gov/meetings/> and Nevada's Public Notice website at <https://notice.nv.gov> as required by NRS 232.2175.

Supporting public material provided to Committee members for this meeting is posted on GOWINN's Website at <https://gowinn.nv.gov/meetings/> may be requested from Katie Gilbertson at 555 E. Washington Ave. Ste. 4900, Las Vegas, Nevada 89101; or call (702) 486-8080.