

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

Wednesday, February 19, 2025 – 2:00 p.m.

**Las Vegas: Sahara West Library
EmployNV Business Hub Glass Gallery
9600 W. Sahara Ave
Las Vegas, NV 89117**

**Carson City: Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation
SAO Auditorium
500 E. Third St.
Carson City, NV 89713**

**Phone Line: (669) 900-6833
Meeting ID: 869 1463 8052
Passcode: 479474**

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present: Don Soderberg (Chair), Marchelee Sneed, Councilman Scott Black, Aubree Barnum, Susan Brager, Irene Bustamante Adams, Drazen Elez, Edward Estipona, George Gault, Kenneth Goodrich, Sarah Johns, Haith Johnson, Kevin Landry, Ken Lawson, Sara Millett, Leslie Mujica, Nancy Olsen, Cheryl Olson, John Parel, Janel Thomas, Dr. Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert, Michael Yoder

Absent: Robert Benner, Brittany Brown, Assemblyman Tracy Brown-May, Jerrie Merritt, Senator Dina Neal, Jesse Wadhams, Thomas White

Also present: Kara Abe, Rene Cantu, Ben Daseler, Juanita Robles-Dominguez, Kimberly Jadidi, Andrew Martinez, Lynn Robinson, Milt Stewart, Tiffany Vazquez

1. CALL TO ORDER – OPENING REMARKS AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Soderberg called the meeting to order and recited the pledge of allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL – CONFIRMATION OF A QUORUM

Per direction from Chair Soderberg, **Tiffany Vazquez** took roll call and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

3. VERIFICATION OF PUBLIC NOTICE POSTING

Tiffany Vazquez affirmed that the agenda and notice of the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) meeting on February 19, 2025, was posted pursuant to Nevada's Open Meeting Law, NRS 241.020.

4. FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT(S) NOTICE

Chair Soderberg read the notice into the record as follows: "Members of the public are invited to make comments at this time. No action may be taken on any matter during public comment until the matter itself has been included on an agenda as an item for possible action. Public comments will be limited to three minutes per person." The Chair invited comments. There were none.

5. ***FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – Approval of December 18, 2024, minutes**
Chair Soderberg called for any discussion on the December 18, 2024, meeting minutes. **It was moved by Susan Brager and seconded by Leslie Mujica to approve the December 18, 2024, minutes. The motion passed.**

6. **OPENING REMARKS – Direction and mission of the GWDB Board**

Chair Soderberg stated that we are an advisory board. The advisory board's job is to gather feedback from the community, employers, and the public sector to advise government, public policyholders and the workforce system. We don't approve budgets or tell people what to do. Our focus is on raising awareness about the work happening in the workforce system like in the EmployNV Business and Career hubs where they help individuals who need training and employers looking for skilled workers. Our main goal is to help the workforce system get the word out, without trying to create new solutions, but by making existing efforts more visible and widely known. The board needs to know what is going on in the workforce. Chair Soderberg reviewed the existing subcommittees and encouraged anyone interested in joining to let him know through Tiffany Vazquez. We need to look at employer engagement and create a subcommittee focused on economic development and employer-employee relations.

Susan Brager asked if anyone had gone to all the chambers and did a 10-minute presentation.

Chair Soderberg said it's a great idea to do outreach to employer groups.

John Parel confirmed that we do have a presence in the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce.

Scott Black commented adding to Chair Soderberg's point about creating visibility. We have two actively involved and engaged CEOs from the Vegas Chamber and the Latin Chamber as members of our 23-member Workforce Development Board. The foundation for enhanced exposure and collaboration is already in place; we just need to unify and build on what we're currently doing.

George Gault commented that more resources are needed in Mesquite.

7. **DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ONLY – Presentation by EmployNV Business and Career Hubs about its system that connects employers with job seekers that are looking for work opportunities in Nevada.**

Ben Daseler, Chief of Workforce Operations, DETR began by introducing EmployNV, the customer and business facing brand of the public workforce in Nevada. EmployNV has online services, all the American job centers have been branded as business, career, a hybrid of business/career, and youth hubs.

Andrew Martinez, Manager, EmployNV Career Hub began by introducing EmployNV Career Hubs. The Career Hub serves WIOA Title I (Adult, Youth, & Dislocated Workers), WIOA Title II (Adult Education, Title III (Wagner-Peyser), Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation), and Welfare Clientele. They provide different career services like resume assistance and have resource centers. Offices can assist to pay for classes and certifications. Some offices are open from 7am – 6pm to assist those that are already working. EmployNV also offers Coursera courses. Employers can get their staff trained at no cost through this.

Scott Black commented that the hubs are in ideal locations, where job seekers and employers congregate, and have easy access to services.

Sarah Johns asked in chat “how do people access the Coursera trainings?”

Andrew Martinez responded there is an email address you can send people to. There is also a link on the EmployNV website.

Sarah Johns asked for clarification, “In order for somebody to get training via Coursera it sounds like they need to get access via a business.”

Andrew Martinez responded No. You can send them to that email address. Staff can answer questions and they will have to verify they are Nevada residents.

Sarah Johns asked if there is a career hub inside Washoe County Jail.

Ben Daseler responded no, it is going to be inside the Southern Desert Correctional Facility.

Lynn Robinson, Manager, EmployNV Business Hub began by introducing EmployNV Business Hubs. EmployNV Business Hubs assist businesses to recruit, hire, train, and retain a skilled workforce at no cost. Each business that works with the hub has a dedicated account manager. There is one point of contact for clients. Business Hubs have access to Labor Market Information, offer financial incentives, host hiring events and job fairs. Some incentives mentioned are Employer-Based Training, On the Job Training, Incentive Based Employment, Work Experience, and Incumbent Worker Training.

John Parel asked where the job database is located.

Lynn Robinson answered employnv.gov and gave Coursera email address coursera@detr.nv.gov.

Chair Soderberg mentioned the need for outreach, so more people know about these hubs “the best kept secret”.

Ben Daseler clarified that Northern Nevada does not have all the locations like Southern Nevada. All the business services are centralized in Reno/Carson/Sparks area.

John Parel added there is an account manager in Fallon and Fernley, slowly moving into other locations.

Don Soderberg asked if there had been any interaction between Lithium Americas and the hub in Winnemucca.

Aubree Barnum answered that there have been ongoing partnerships with EmployNV. There was a tour held at the Tech Center. There is a lot of value added to getting a hand on visual, walking through their process.

John Parel added it was a good tour to see the jobs, to learn what they are looking for, what the ideal employee would be. At some point, they will work with Winnemucca office.

Edward Estipona commented that the partnership is strong. Three years ago, there were a lot of silos in Workforce, but these are slowly being reduced, which is a good thing. We don't have resources in our state to be able to do some of the things that maybe California is doing. We need to get dollars to be able to get to all our communities. The changes happening are significant, and a lot of hard work has gone into making them happen. People may not appreciate the effort involved, especially considering these groups weren't collaborating a few years ago.

Haith Johnson provided a testimony of using EmployNV as a business owner. She was grateful for the services provided and it worked well. Her company brought on a new hire who is outstanding and was thoroughly vetted for them. The value these workers bring is great.

8. DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ONLY – Presentation by JAG Nevada (Jobs for Nevada’s Graduates) about its efforts to target a diverse group of Nevada youth and provide them with skills and motivation to graduate.

Rene Cantu, Executive Director, JAG Nevada expressed that many high school students lack knowledge of careers and workplace experience, which JAG helps address through engagement and support. The program teaches essential skills such as resume writing, interviewing, time management, teamwork, and professionalism. JAG has successfully helped hundreds of young people, particularly from Southern Nevada, transition directly into careers, including with companies like Tesla, providing paid education, jobs, benefits, and even covering the first month's rent. The goal is to eliminate barriers to education and employment, empowering Nevada's youth to succeed in both education and the workforce. JAG is all about equipping young people with the skills they need to support themselves and build prosperous lives.

Evelyn Thompson asked what types of positions the JAG students are getting.

Rene Cantu explained that the students start in a basic capacity. When they succeed in this role, they gain opportunities to move into different departments within Tesla, with some staying for 7-9 years. He continued to speak on the operations of JAG. JAG operates in 14 Nevada counties with 52 programs in 43 high schools. The program focuses on work readiness, case management, and removing barriers to education and employment. JAG defines success in various ways, including college, military enlistment, or apprenticeships. They're working to establish more partnerships with trade unions and organizations to address the lack of college and career readiness for both K-12 students and adults. JAG targets key challenges like economic disadvantage, lack of work experience, and transportation barriers, offering structured support to help turn students' lives around. The program is embedded within high schools to reach students where they are, providing career exposure both in the classroom and through employer partnerships. Additionally, JAG follows up with students for one year after graduation, continuing to provide case management and coaching. They aim to help students acquire transferable skills, exposure to various career paths, and the support needed to succeed in the workforce. JAG is always seeking new business partnerships and training providers to connect students to career opportunities.

Ken Lawson inquired if there is a list of schools where JAG operates and how employers can arrange to present directly to the students.

Rene Cantu replied to go to jagnevada.org. He will share his contact info and can provide a list.

Edward Estipona asked if assistance was needed with making connections and whether he has had much success.

Rene Cantu acknowledged they are always seeking volunteers to speak with students or serve as judges at our career conference in April. Our program is highly scalable, effective, and has a proven track record. Given the great need, we are looking to expand and scale the model, which is already successful and ready to be implemented across Nevada.

Edward Estipona added he has worked with various community foundations and there are potential grant opportunities available through donor-advised funds. JAG has a great model, and it addresses not only the challenges faced by young people dealing with generational poverty, but also the broader issues that many young people, regardless of their economic background, face. The biggest challenge in Southern Nevada, which has persisted for years, is the lack of skilled tradespeople.

Rene Cantu mentioned their work with CTE in high schools. He highlighted a comment that one set of kids had all the technical skills but the kids from JAG had all the universal soft skills.

9. DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ONLY – New Business from Full Board Members

Chair Soderberg called for any new business from the board. Seeing none, he reiterated that if anyone is interested in serving on one of the existing subcommittees, they should reach out as there are vacancies. Additionally, he encouraged members to share ideas for a new subcommittee focused on employer engagement and economic development.

10. SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

Chair Soderberg called for a second round of public comment. There were none.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**
The February 19, 2025 meeting was adjourned.

Notice of this meeting was posted on or before 9 a.m. on the third day prior to the meeting on the Internet at:

<https://gowinn.nv.gov/boards-commissions/gwdb/> and
[Nevada's Public Notice website at https://notice.nv.gov/](https://notice.nv.gov/), as required by NRS 232.2175.

Supporting public material provided to Committee members for this meeting is posted on OWINN's Website at <https://gowinn.nv.gov/boards-commissions/gwdb/> and may be requested from the Executive Director's Office at 1 State of Nevada Way, Las Vegas, Nevada 89119; or call (702) 486-8080.

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