



Full Board Retreat
November 21, 2024
Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Chair Mike Grey; Matthew Weldon; Kristen Adamo; Paul Alvarez; Marc Amato; Mario Bueno; David Chenevert; Robin Coia; Shannon Gilkey; Steve Kitchin; Joseph Murphy; Jennifer Ortiz; Heather Singleton; Elizabeth Tanner; Darrell Waldron; Erica Hammond; and Paul MacDonald.

Guest: The Honorable Governor Daniel J. McKee

Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Chair Grey called the meeting to order at 12:52 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the Retreat. He thanked Board Members and Committee Members for attending. He said the work of the Board is meaningful and important. The Board's function is to find the best resources to help the people of Rhode Island. He then introduced Director Matthew Weldon.

Director Weldon thanked Chair Grey for his outstanding leadership and thanked the Board Members for their hard work. He acknowledged Executive Director Alyssa Alvarado and the GWB Team for the great work they are doing. He went on to elaborate on the need to work together and stay positive moving forward during these challenging times.

Presentation of Exemplary Service Award to George Nee

Chair Grey presented Member George Nee with an Exemplary Service Award and thanked him for his 42 years of service to the State of Rhode Island's Workforce Boards.

Director Weldon thanked Member George Nee for his years of service and dedication to the labor community.

The Rhode to Prosperity: Presentation & Conversation

Director Weldon gave a brief overview of Governor's McKee's Rhode Island 2030 Plan. He stated that the Governor's intent is to raise incomes and increase wealth for Rhode Islanders by partnering with business leaders, labor groups, institutes of higher education and government to build a more prosperous Rhode Island.

The Honorable Governor Daniel J. McKee

Governor McKee elaborated on his vision for the State of Rhode Island. He discussed the importance of the Rhode Island 2030 Plan which has multiple pieces in terms of jobs, education, housing, and health to generate results for Rhode Islanders. He stated that the 2030 Plan is a living document. He said the Learn 365 RI Plan will help Rhode Island meet goals on education. Governor McKee thanked the Board Members for their work and the people who support the work of the Workforce Board.

Jeremy Chiappetta, Senior Advisory to Governor Daniel J. McKee

Jeremy discussed the vision of the 365 Plan stating the importance of prioritizing learning, health monitoring and workforce training and development for young people to achieves goals and the need to support our young people outside of the school day to achieve goals through opportunities. He stated Community Learning Centers are planned across Rhode Island.

Shannon Gilkey, Commissioner of Post Secondary Education

Commissioner Gilkey discussed the Rhode to Prosperity Plan strategy and goals. The goals of the Plan are focused on three areas, increasing educational attainment aligned to economic demand, increasing per capita personal income and workforce participation, and increasing home ownership. He stated the strategy of the Plan is focused on pathways to higher-wage employment, work-based learning, community involvement and strategic investments in housing and population growth.

Director Matthew Weldon

Director Weldon stated the Rhode to Prosperity strategy relies on proven tools to help job seekers advance themselves in our economy and help employers secure the talent they need to thrive by retooling the Real Jobs RI program, championing work-based learning models and aligning public workforce system and K-12/higher education investments to these practices. He said it is important to set-up programs to help meaningful growth and to track personal per capital income labor market trends.

The floor was opened for questions and discussion.

Director Weldon thanked Governor McKee for attending and supporting the Board's work.

Approval of May 15th Meeting Minutes

Chair Grey called the Board's attention to the meeting minutes and asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from May 15, 2024.

VOTE: Member Steve Kitchin motioned to approve, seconded by Member Shannon Gilkey

All were in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion on the FY26-FY27 Biennial Plan

Corey Jones, Chief of Policy and Planning, discussed the proposed FY26-27 Biennial Plan. He stated that every two years the GWB develops a strategic statewide employment and training plan. The Plan is focused on outlining goals to service our workforce. The Plan adheres to the following four key strategies: demand-driven investments; career pathways; aligned policy; and data and performance. He said that the Plan was reviewed by the Executive Committee and went on to elaborate on the feedback and changes made to the Plan. He asked the Members if they had any additional suggestions. There were none.

Updates

Alyssa Alvarado, Executive Director, thanked the Members for their time and commitment to the work of the GWB. She spoke about the decrease in federal funding

available and ways to add value such as developing resources and tools to help employers connect with target populations and sharing resources. The Education, Training, and Career Resource Guide for Young Adults, and the Accessing Untapped Talent Series for employers are examples. She stated there was a successful Disability Hiring Resource Symposium for Employers held in October. She also said despite the decline in federal funding, the youth programs remain strong.

Junior Achievement of Rhode Island: Updates on www.RIEXL.org

Alyssa Alvarado introduced Jeff Cartee and Lee Lewis of Junior Achievement to give an update on JA Inspire & Rhode Island's Experiential Learning Navigator. Lee Lewis gave a background on JA Inspire and went on to review the 2023 Program Summary stating the highlights. He stated the 2024 JA Inspire 8th Grade Career Exploration Fair is scheduled for December 10th -- 12th and will be held at the Rhode Island Convention Center and over 5,800 8th grade students will be attending.

Jeff Cartee stated that his team is excited to be working with DLT and the GWB on the Experiential Learning Navigator. He went on to discuss the Rhode Island Experiential Learning Navigator and gave updates on the website www.RIEXL.org.

Crash Course of Artificial Intelligence Tools: A Cursory Demonstration

Corey Jones stated that the GWB collaborated with students at Brown University to conduct an analysis on how AI may impact RI's workforce and went on to state some facts on AI. Joseph Agresti, Data Analyst from the Labor Market Information Division at DLT, explained job exposure due to AI. Next, Corey and Joe did a demonstration using AI tools.

Fireside Chat on the Anticipated Impact of Artificial Intelligence

Alyssa Alvarado introduced Zhu (Drew) Zhang, Chair in Artificial Intelligence and Business Analytics at the University of Rhode Island. Professor Zhang is a researcher, teacher, and practitioner in the areas of artificial intelligence and business analytics. Professor Zhang stated his background in AI. Corey Jones and Professor Zhang had an open discussion on the anticipated impact of AI.

The floor was open for questions and discussions.

Diversity Moment

Chair Grey shared a spotlight on Native American Heritage Month which is celebrated in November.

Adjournment

Chair Grey thanked everyone for attending and participating. He then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Member Jennifer Ortiz motion to adjourn, seconded by Member Steven Kitchin.

All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Fregeau
Office Manager GWB

DRAFT