



MEETING MINUTES
NYC Workforce Development Board
Quarterly Meeting
Wednesday, December 11, 2024
8:30 AM – 10:30 AM

Attendance

Board Members Present:

Laurice Arroyo	Linda Baran	Scott Berger
Dave Bolotsky	Grace Bonilla	Daniel Bustillo
Lenore Friedlaender	Katy Gaul-Stigge	Sarah Henderson
Christina Ho	Laura James	Angie Kamath
Matt Klein	Degan Leopold	Randy Peers
Merrill Pond	Adria Powell	Daphany Sanchez
Alysia Steinmann	Lauren Andersen (Designee)	Eliana Palmay (Designee)
Shehila Stephens (Designee)		

Guests Present:

Ebony Beaty	Doug Cotter	N-Akita Felix
Diandra Malahoo	Greg Morris	Linda Nguyen
Yurij Pawluk	Yvonne Riley-Tepie	Ardis Sanmoogan
Sin Ting So	Mustafa Tabakovic	Harini Venkatesh

Staff Present:

Adolpho Casillas	Brendan Collins	Deepa Dhawan
Leah Hebert	Nija Howard	Martha Jackson
Daniel Liss	Chris Neale	Shondelle Nicholls
Keon Pitter	Abby Jo Sigal	Matthew Walker

Welcome

Co-Chair Merrill Pond started the meeting at 8:35 am, welcoming members and previewing the Board meeting agenda items. A quorum of members was present at the meeting. Chair Pond asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the October 2024 Board meeting, which member Katy Gaul-Stigge proposed and another member seconded. The Board approved the meeting minutes unanimously.

NYC Talent Updates and Preparing for a Federal Transition

Abby Jo Sigal, Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Talent and Workforce Development (NYC Talent) provided updates on the activities and accomplishments of the office. She indicated that the NYC Talent team was heavily involved in the National Disability and Employment Awareness (NDEAM) month in October and in Apprenticeship Week in November. Executive Director Sigal also emphasized how successful Workforce Week was the previous week of December 2, as organized by Greg Morris and Stephanie Birmingham of the New York City Employment and Training Coalition.

Executive Director Sigal also updated the Board on the progress on Community Hiring, indicating that the formal rulemaking process is nearly complete after the team convened a public hearing in November. The City announced two project labor agreements that will cover \$1 billion in infrastructure projects and include Community Hiring goals that will increase access for residents of NYCHA and low-income ZIP codes to connect with quality careers in the unionized construction sector.

According to Executive Director Sigal, First Deputy Mayor Maria Torres-Springer is leading the City's effort to prepare for the federal transition. With respect to issues related to the NYC economy, these efforts include identifying the best path forward on key citywide initiatives, opportunities for continued progress with our federal partners, and how we can best communicate our shared values and priorities. She stated further that NYC Talent is always paying attention to any potential federal policy and funding changes that could impact workforce development in the City and that we are working internally and with many local stakeholders to try to understand any new details as they unfold.

Finally, with respect to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Executive Director Sigal shared that the NYC Talent team has been in regular communication with the City's Federal Legislative Affairs team. She further emphasized that the City is laser-focused on the progress of WIOA reauthorization and we will mobilize and leverage our resources and relationships to advocate for changes that will benefit New York residents and employers.

Director's Report

Chris Neale, Director of the New York City Workforce Development Board, provided an update on several key items. First, with respect to the WIOA Local Plan, Director Neale explained that, under WIOA, local boards must develop a new local plan every four years. The plan must contain a number of elements, including key sector trends, local workforce assets, local talent challenges, and a number of other elements. According to Director Neale, NYC intends to leverage writing the plan as an opportunity to solicit extensive feedback from members of the Council and Board in developing a clear and strategic framework for the local workforce system. NYC Talent will kick off this project in the New Year and share additional details at the joint Council and Board meeting in February.

Second, Director Neale gave an update on Apprenticeship Week, a national celebration of apprenticeships which took place during the week of November 18. NYC Talent, according to Director Neale, was heavily involved in events taking place in New York City. The City announced that it would achieve 15,000 apprenticeships – halfway to Mayor Adams’ moonshot goal of 30,000 by 2030 – by the end of the calendar year, ahead of schedule. Additionally, the City rang the opening Nasdaq bell with NY Jobs CEO Council, our Apprenticeship Accelerator launched our Community of Practice to support the development of new apprenticeship programs, and we joined the NYSDOL Commissioner Roberta Reardon at an event to pitch registered apprenticeship to manufacturing companies. Other highlights included an NBC news piece about apprentices at the Roundabout Theatre Company, the CUNY 2X Tech Summit hosted by the NYC Tech Talent Pipeline, and a celebration of high school-aged youth apprentices led by a collaboration among NYC Talent, NYC Public Schools, and CareerWise New York.

Third, Director Neale described a draft tool for small businesses to use to engage with their employees. The Board previously provided input on the development of this tool through the Racial Equity Committee during the pandemic, a tool that the Committee referred to at the time as a DEI toolkit. The goal of the project is to develop a business friendly "how-to guide" for employers on how to set up best practices to engage with their employees through a self-assessment process. For this project, the NYC Talent team and its consultant performed a number of interviews along with desktop research to arrive at the draft toolkit outline. Director Neale indicated that NYC Talent plans to host one or two virtual feedback sessions with members to solicit their feedback. The JPMorgan Chase Foundation is providing funding to support the project and the Manufacturing and Industrial Innovation Council (MIIIC), an industry partnership that is part of NYC Talent, is spearheading the project.

Update on Workforce Week

Greg Morris, a member of the NYC Workforce Development Council and CEO of the New York City Employment and Training Coalition, a membership-based workforce advocacy organization, provided a recap of Workforce Week, a conference for the workforce development community in New York City. Member Morris thanked the many people in the room who helped with organizing or participating on panels during the Workforce Week.

The purpose of the week was to elicit the priorities for 2025 from the 200+ workforce providers and to build on the Pathways to an Inclusive Economy report. The conference portion of the week spanned two days, with the first day focused on policy and the second on practice. NYCETC opened the week with an opening reception hosted in collaboration with NY Jobs CEO Council and the Fund for the City of New York on Monday, with First Deputy Mayor Maria Torres-Springer and Kathy Wylde, CEO of Partnership for NYC and a member of the Workforce Development Council. The opening speaker on the policy day was Adrienne Adams, Speaker of the NYC City Council. According to member Morris, there were 300 attendees on each day of the conference and 140 speakers. On the fourth day of

Workforce Week, NYCETC convened a Mayoral candidate breakfast forum on the human services workforce and City contracting issues. On Friday, NYCETC hosted City and State's State Legislators Retreat. In total, 1,000 people participated in person in Workforce Week.

Update on WIOA Reauthorization

Chris Neale, Director of the Board, and Therese Daly, Chief Advocacy and Government Affairs Officer from the New York Association for Training and Employment Professionals (NYATEP), gave an update on WIOA reauthorization.

Director Neale provided a brief timeline of events about WIOA reauthorization in 2024. He then highlighted the City's top concerns with the current reauthorization bill:

- **50% minimum training on spending:** Requires minimum spending of Adult funds on training. It would lead to an estimated 7,000+ fewer positions filled through no-cost recruitment services for businesses
- **State set-aside:** Would increase by ten percentage points, from 15% to 25% across all three streams of funding (Adult, DW, and Youth). At current budget levels, it would mean a loss of \$13 million to NYC.
- **Financial penalties:** If a local area fails for two years in a row to hit a certain performance threshold, then the penalty will be a 5% reduction in the funding stream. At current budget levels, the penalty would be \$1.5 million for NYC.

He further described the various efforts that NYC Talent is making to engage partners about the legislation, including the City's Federal Legislative Affairs team, NYATEP (New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals), the U.S. Conference of Mayors Workforce Development Council, and the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB).

Member Katy Gaul-Stigge agreed that the minimum goal of spending 50% of Adult and Dislocated Worker dollars in training is too high. However, she proposed that the Board strongly consider setting a goal to expend a higher percentage of its budget on training than it currently is, which, according to the current budget provided by SBS, is about 25%.

Ms. Daly provided an update on WIOA reauthorization in Washington, D.C. She provided a history of the legislation this year, tracing an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote in the House of Representatives for A Stronger Workforce for America (ASWA) bill to the draft bill released by the Senate HELP Committee. Ms. Daly then described a chaotic turn of events that led to some changes to the bill. She emphasized that there was still a good chance that the bill could pass by the last working day of the current Congressional session, December 20. The Senate had moved to a "hotline" format to call all Senators to see if they had any objections to the bill in a move to fast track the bill for passage. She also highlighted mixed reactions in the workforce sector to the latest version of the bill. Ultimately, according to Ms. Daly, the fate of the bill was still an open question.

Member Angie Kamath asked what Board members can do to prepare for any immediate budget implications. Ms. Daly explained that the U.S. Department of Labor will have at least one year to implement new legislation, which will give the Board some time to prepare and plan.

Member Randy Peers stressed that there will be a Continuing Resolution, not a federal budget, and that the real “jeopardy” is in a new culture of efficiency in Washington, D.C., and what might get cut in a budget deal.

Overview of WIOA Activities and Performance

Director Neale provided an update on WIOA activities and performance. DYCD has awarded its Youth contracts for both In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth contracts and SBS is in full swing reviewing responses to its Workforce1 Request for Proposals.

He highlighted that New York City did not pass one of the WIOA performance measures for two years in a row: Adult credential attainment rate. He explained that the City was caught by surprise because the Board and NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) had invested a significant amount of time into addressing their performance on this and other WIOA measures.

Director Neale reminded the Board that there are six measures under WIOA, two of which relate to customers who enroll in training programs:

- **Measurable Skill Gains:** an indicator that individuals are learning during the course of a training
- **Credential Attainment Rate:** an indicator of the percentage of customers participating in training who earn a recognized postsecondary credential

Director Neale flagged that NYC is achieving 75% on its Adult credential attainment rate after the first quarter of the current Program Year (Program Year 2024, which spans July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025). To pass an individual measure, a local area must achieve at least 80% of its goal, so NYC is within “striking distance.” He pointed out that the problem is not performance – NYC selects trainings that lead to credentials. The problem is that we aren’t fully capturing the data and transferring it to the State’s data system. The Youth Measurable Skills Gain percentage was also not at a passing level, but DYCD clarified that this figure invariably rises significantly over the course of the Program Year.

Update on Adult WIOA Activities and Performance

Yurij Pawluk, Deputy Commissioner of Citywide Workforce Opportunity at the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS), gave an update on adult WIOA activities.

Commissioner Pawluk first gave an update on Workforce1 and training performance. Traffic has increased at the Workforce1 Centers to a level higher than it was before the pandemic. SBS has also increased the number of customers enrolled in training compared

to last year. The Workforce1 system has diversified the types of jobs developed, which provides greater variety and choice for customers. SBS is offering up to \$200,000 in incentives to its vendors to develop new jobs outside of the four most common economic sectors: security, home care, food service, and warehousing. SBS recently invited leadership from the Workforce1 vendor staff for a strategy session to share feedback and ideas about what's working well and what could be improved.

Commissioner Pawluk also described that SBS has taken over the leadership of Jobs NYC and will be operating one large hiring hall per month across the five boroughs, as well as additional smaller events. At the October Staten Island event, employer satisfaction rates were at 100% and jobseeker satisfaction rates in the mid-90s, which were the highest levels seen to date for these events.

Finally, Commissioner Pawluk addressed the Adult credential attainment rate. He stated that the problem is not performance, it's capturing the credentials in the data system. Finally, he stated that SBS has been defining credentials too narrowly and will be revisiting the definition to interpret it in the broadest allowable terms.

Update on Youth WIOA Activities and Performance

Valerie Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner of Youth Workforce Connect at the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), gave an update on youth WIOA activities.

Commissioner Mulligan shared that the WIOA In-School Youth ("Learn & Earn") and Out-of-School Youth ("Train & Earn") competitive Request for Proposals process had taken much more time than expected, but that DYCD was now in a good place with its selected providers. She explained that DYCD has announced the awards, convened the providers, offered substantial trainings, and plans to have youth customers starting programming in January. She emphasized that the Learn & Earn programs will now be housed exclusively in schools, which is a shift towards fully embedding the programs with NYC Public Schools' high schools.

She also described the underperformance on the WIOA Youth Measurable Skills Gain indicator in Quarter 1. DYCD's providers have not yet received the youth customers' semester grades, because the semester is not yet over for high school students. But once the semester ends in early 2025, that figure will rise significantly as the providers collect and report these grades for Learn & Earn customers, which are one type of activity that count towards this measure.

Commissioner Mulligan described a new, City-funded workforce program launched by DYCD called CRED (Community Resources for Employment and Development). The program targets 18 to 40 year olds in neighborhoods with high levels of community

violence, providing credential-driven training and connecting participants to relevant jobs. DYCD just made eight awards to providers, which will launch their programs in January.

She further stated that DYCD has about 7,000 young people enrolled in Work, Learn, and Grow, who just completed early college CUNY courses and earned college credits, earned money during training, and will complete an internship. DYCD recently made an innovation by including all Learn & Earn customers in Work, Learn, and Grow services, who will benefit from these college and career preparation services.

Finally, Commissioner Mulligan stated that the Ladders for Leaders application launched on December 9. Many Board members have been strong partners of the program. DYCD has shifted its summer internship design focus to Ladders for Leaders, revamping the pre-employment training and setting much clearer expectations for providers for that element to ensure youth are prepared for summer internships.

Member Katy Gaul-Stigge asked if the late start of the Youth contracts this year could have a negative impact on the WIOA performance measures. Commissioner Mulligan replied that they definitely could, but explained that she is more concerned about spending. DYCD is reviewing its options and developing a plan for spending.

Meeting Closing

Co-Chair Adria Powell thanked everyone for attending the meeting and noted the exact date for the next meeting. She motioned to close the meeting, which was presented, seconded, and voted unanimously in the affirmative. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM.