



**NORTHWEST REGIONAL  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**  
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**Annual Meeting for the Consortium Executive Committee of  
Lead Elected Officials Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 11:00 AM**

**VIA Virtual Conference Video Call at:**

<https://zoom.us/j/93652505142?pwd=RzI3WTU0UENIZ3kzak50OFRINWE0QT09>

Meeting ID: 936 5250 5142

Passcode: 241483

*Participating: Mayor Neil M. O’Leary, Mayor Pete Bass, Mayor Elinor Carbone, Mayor N. Warren "Pete" Hess*

*Also in attendance: C. Awwad, M. Hayden, S. Mertz*

*Meeting commenced at 11:05am*

**1. Review and Approval of Minutes from June 3, 2020**

A motion to approve was made by N. Hess and seconded by P. Bass. Motion approved.

**2. Approval of Contracts**

a. JFES - \$ 1,411,559.00 (Tentative)

b. WIOA - \$3,427,742.00 (Tentative)

c. CYEP- \$1,102,500.00 (Tentative)

d. DCF - \$105,000.00

e. ADS – \$917,220.07 (3-Year Allocation)

\*Pending issuance from the Connecticut Department of Labor. Funding levels may vary.

A motion to approve was made by P. Bass and seconded by N. Hess. Motion approved.

**3. Approval of 4-year Local Plan from October 1, 2020 through June 30, 2024**

A motion to approve was made by P. Bass and seconded by E. Carbone. Motion approved.

**4. Approval of Contract with Career Resources for WIOA Career Services and JFES Case Management – TBD per funding allocation**

A motion to approve was made by E. Carbone and seconded by N. Hess. Motion approved.



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- 5. Approval of One-Stop Operator Contract: Northwest CT Chamber of Commerce - \$125,000.00**  
A motion to approve was made by E. Carbone and seconded by P. Bass. Motion approved.
- 6. Review and Approval of Memorandum of Understanding(s) and Infrastructure Funding Agreements with the following partner(s):**
  - a. CT Department of Aging and Disability Services
  - b. CT Department of Social Services
  - c. CT Department of Labor
  - d. CT State Department of Education
  - e. The Workplace: SCSEP
  - f. The Workplace: Veterans' Program
  - g. Job Corps: New Haven Job Corp Center
  - h. New Opportunities Inc.
  - i. Naugatuck Valley Community College
  - j. Northwestern Connecticut Community College
  - k. MASC
  - l. Waterbury Housing AuthorityA motion to approve was made by P. Bass and seconded by E. Carbone. Motion approved.
- 7. Review and Approval of Draft of All Funds Budget**  
A conditional motion to approve was made by E. Carbone and seconded by N. Hess. Conditional motion approved.
- 8. Review of Annual Audit Report by Mahoney-Sabol**  
No motion necessary.
- 9. Approval of 3-year engagement with Mahoney-Sabol for Annual Audit:**
  - a. Year Ending June 30, 2021 - \$21,000.00
  - b. Year Ending June 30, 2022 - \$21,500.00
  - c. Year Ending June 30, 2023 - \$22,000.00A motion to approve was made by P. Bass and seconded by N. Hess. Motion approved.
- 10. Approval of Cost Allocation Plan**  
A motion to approve was made by E. Carbone and seconded by P. Bass. Motion approved.
- 11. Update on COVID-19 Reopening Plans**  
As of June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, the Department of Labor has opened its doors to the general public and the NRWIB has reopened for in-person appointments. The NRWIB is



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pleased to have their partners back in the office. Staff is encouraged to be vaccinated and the NRWIB is working through the determination of some legal views as to whether staff will be mandated to be vaccinated to ensure their health and protect the public. Currently staff must wear a mask while in the office if outside of their own personal office and/or cubicle, and while in a public space. C. Awwad expressed that the NRWIB is happy to have the public back and is hoping to re-engage more individuals, and to continue to fill the numerous job opportunities that are available. M. Hayden also expressed his optimism to re-open the doors to the public and emphasized NRWIB's eagerness to get the public back into the workforce, given the multitude of job openings through the region.

**12. Discussion of Pandemic Related Impacts on Workforce Development System**

C. Awwad advised the mayors that the NRWIB is working with the State Department of Labor and the individuals that are controlling \$123,000,000.00 of ARPA funds at a state level, that has been allocated for workforce development. C. Awwad was unsure as to how those funds will be parceled out to the workforce boards. There has been some concern regarding the development of an entity called the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS), that appears to be looking to create a "cookie-cutter" model throughout the state and control these funds. C. Awwad advised the mayors that the NRWIB has had some good conversations with the OWS and come to a mutual understanding of how the system needs to continue to operate on a regional basis, so that there can be local impact to address each of the mayors' needs. C. Awwad also expressed her concern that some of the changes that are being proposed may impact the workforce board's ability to have that local determination. The workforce board expects funding for training, not necessarily for staff, to become available by September, and has set up a plan to enhance training opportunities for construction, manufacturing, healthcare, information technology, CDL drivers, etc. The NRWIB knows what needs to be done and is developing programs to meet those needs. C. Awwad reassured the mayors that if there is anything either they or their constituents need, the NRWIB is only a phone call away and its doors are open to start sending constituents over as needed. C. Awwad also informed the mayors that the workforce board is starting a media campaign on billboards, buses, and through digital media to encourage the public to get back to work, centered around the Governor's \$1000.00 "back-to-work bonus," by placing people back into work and making the match. C. Awwad hopes to get people placed into training programs ASAP and throughout the summer, in anticipation of September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021, when individuals will stop receiving the additional \$300/week pandemic-related UI additional funds. C. Awwad reminded the mayors that the workforce boards do utilize the Chambers of Commerce to reach out to employers to help them provide business services, and the NRWIB is excited to

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have the three major chambers back on. The NRWIB has worked with the Chamber of Commerce in New Milford to bring in Denise Delmastro and get her involvement, as well as JoAnn Ryan from the Northwest CT Chamber of Commerce, and the Naugatuck Waterbury Chamber of Commerce, etc. The NRWIB is very happy with the outcome of collaborating with the chambers.

**13. Other Business**

Mayor E. Carbone expressed her gratitude for C. Awwad and the NRWIB for keeping our region of Connecticut on the path to getting the workforce back to work and providing such opportunities. E. Carbone has been especially grateful for the work that the NRWIB has done with Rista Malanca in creating a makerspace, which she hopes is designed enough for local manufacturers and can make connections for the many vacancies they have in their workforce needs.

C. Awwad advised the mayors that the Northwest region of Connecticut has started the Next Gen Manufacturing Partnership. Each of the workforce boards were encouraged to do so by the Governor's Workforce Development Council, and the partnership in the Northwest region is probably the most advanced of all five in the state. The partnership has some excellent manufacturers at the table, including Evan Berns at Seitz, LLC, who has been very helpful with the plastics program in Waterbury. There are also great partners from the Danbury, New Milford, and Torrington areas, such as the Albert Brothers, Inc., and Rich DuPont helping as well. The workforce board is working to develop the workforce that manufacturers are clamoring for. The Next Gen Manufacturing Partnership has been so successful that the NRWIB is hoping to launch a healthcare partnership in the fall, joining Nuvance in the Danbury/New Milford area, Trinity, Prospect Health, and Hartford Health, including Charlotte Hungerford Hospital and Brian Mattiello.

C. Awwad reiterated that the NRWIB staff is very busy, doing the best they can, keeping the staff motivated and getting everyone moving in the same direction. C. Awwad also expressed her appreciation for all the mayors' support as well.

Mayor N. O'Leary expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the entire NRWIB staff and the work that they do.

**14. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by E. Carbone and seconded by P. Bass at 11:31AM. Motion approved.