



**NORTHWEST REGIONAL  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**  
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**Board of Director's Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 12:00 PM  
Held in Person at the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board  
249 Thomaston Avenue,  
Waterbury, CT  
Lunch was provided**

**In attendance:** G. Pisani; S. Romano; B. Dupont; J. Ryan; W. Pizzuto; G. LaCapra; J. Vrabely; A. Canu; M. Palmerie; C. D'Orso; E. Hawthorne; C. Rafael; C. Chimento; S.Jannetty; P. Smithwick; C. Amatruda (on behalf of F. Spagnolo)

**Also in attendance:** S. Wilderman; W. Leary; S. Barbieri; M. Kordowski; B. Amin; D. Collins

**Staff in attendance:** C. Awwad; M. Hayden; G. Fonseca; S. Mertz; D. Babcock; P. LaRosa; A. Goncalves; M. McCreedy

Meeting commenced at 12:00pm

*G. Pisani recognized C. Chimeto from Trinity Health of New England with Saint Mary's Hospital and C. D'Orso from the Waterbury Housing Authority as new members on the Board of Directors, as well as E. Hawthorne as the new president of the Connecticut AFL-CIO, and congratulated W. Pizzuto as a new public sector elected official.*

**1. Approval of Minutes from December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

A motion to approve was made by W. Pizzuto and seconded by J. Ryan. Motion approved.

**2. Updates:**

**a. Committees**

**• Personnel - JoAnn Ryan**

Nothing was reported.

**• Youth - Fernando C. Spagnolo**

C. Amatruda on behalf of Chief F. Spagnolo reported that Jalil Shabazz replaced Angelica Heron as the NRWIB'S Manager of Youth Programs and advised the board that the NRWIB submitted a Supplemental Request for Youth Employment Proposals for Out of School Youth.



**NORTHWEST REGIONAL  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

FIRST JOB | NEXT JOB | BEST JOB

- **Finance - William Pizzuto**

W. Pizzuto reported Cheryl Chasse retired as of February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and that job position has been posted, and interviews are underway. The NRWIB Accounting & Financial Policies and Procedures Manual were changed and reviewed by the Finance Committee on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 in preparation for the federal consolidated compliance review.

- **One Stop - Joseph Wrinn**

Nothing was reported.

- **Disability - Joseph Vrabley**

Nothing was reported.

**b. DOL – Steve Romano**

S. Romano reported that the DOL continues to serve the public with their expertise and skill, and that their traffic is down but they are continuing efforts to attract more employment services or non-unemployment insurance customers. The UI traffic at the American Job Center (AJC) has been really reduced, but the contact centers have done a great job serving those individuals. The DOL continues to target certain unemployed insurance claimants to go down to the AJC for service, mostly through their RESEA program. There has been local and federal monitoring done for various programs, including their Veterans program, local monitoring for their Wagner-Peyser program, and their RESEA program. Their staff has attended various training programs to make sure they complete their work more accurately. DOL staff was also being transitioned to acquire their certified professional resume writer accreditation, and everyone will have that in approximately 2-3 months. Re-Employ CT will roll out on approximately July 1<sup>st</sup>, which will be a massive change for everything the DOL does. There will be a lot of training for the DOL staff in May and June for that. S. Romano believes that will be quite an information-gathering system, and once it is up and running it will be a great asset.

**c. One-Stop Center Director Update – Denise Babcock**

**D. Babcock reported:**

- The Peer Recovery Career Navigator for the Opioid Grant was hired and started 2/28/2022.
- JFES Career Navigators and WIOA Career Navigators have completed the NorthStar Digital Literacy Proctor training. This training gives staff the ability to assess their participants computer skills. Participants will be required to take these tests to better demonstrate their computer skill knowledge.
- Danbury staff continues to meet with customers in New Milford monthly at the Town Hall by appointment to deliver basic information on services provided at the American Job Center

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**NORTHWEST REGIONAL  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**  
FIRST JOB | NEXT JOB | BEST JOB

➤ Information Sessions continue to be held virtually.

**PY21 Program Year**

Total ITA's issued for PY 21 (July 1, 2021- February, 28 2022)

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>ITA's</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
WIOA – Adult	17	\$45,416.75
WIOA – DLW	35	\$101,178.00
Apprenticeship CT Initiative (ACI)	22	\$89,900.00
Apprenticeship CT 2.0 – Plastics	17	\$111,920.00
Opioid Grant	4	\$1,650.00
CARES II	36	\$125,466.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>\$475,530.75</b>

**d. President and CEO Update – Cathy Awwad**

- **Update on CareerConneCT application**
- **Update on compliance monitoring**
- **Update on NRWIB staff**

C. Awwad recognized Director of Planning and Strategic Development, Genny Fonseca, to give the board a quick overview of the Northwest region's CareerCT GreenJobs application:

G. Fonseca informed the Board that the state had made a \$62 million investment aimed at getting people back to work through the CareerConneCT program, G. Fonseca advised the Board that 4 of the 5 state workforce boards were tasked at addressing specific sectors including healthcare, manufacturing, CDL, information technology, and green jobs (our application), and the NRWIB ended up putting forth a \$15.2 million application, intended for staff training, support services, and increased employer engagement on a statewide level in the industry of green energy. The Office of Workforce Strategy's (OWS) timeline for launch of the program and its online portal is slated for late April/early May 2022, at which time residents of the state of CT can



## NORTHWEST REGIONAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

FIRST JOB | NEXT JOB | BEST JOB

register for information regarding how they may enter training in the sector of their choice. On a statewide level, the NRWIB hopes to train 1,000 individuals over the 4-year period in green energy. The NRWIB is also partnering with the OWS to develop a robust state recruitment and outreach campaign for the program. G. Fonseca thanked the Board members and other partner agencies for their letters of support, and voiced that she expected to have many more updates and reports regarding the initiative at the next board meeting.

M. Hayden updated the Board on the regional sector partnerships. M. Haydren advised the Board that in an effort to revive Connecticut's workforce development and align business needs with education and training programs, the Governor's Workforce Council approached the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment board to join forces with the Next Generation Sector Partnerships. This alliance formed the Northwest Connecticut Manufacturing Partnership, the first regionwide, industry-led effort of its kind. Its aim is to promote the benefits of manufacturing careers to key target audiences, as well as provide local education programs with insights on the latest industry trends and curriculum changes needed to train new manufacturing talent. The partnership was launched in February 2021, and leading the effort are top executives from companies such as Hubbard-Hall Inc., Marion Manufacturing, and Resource Development Associates. The Partnership launched a marketing campaign that will engage new manufacturing talent through in-person school visits, company tours, virtual and in-person events, etc. Kicking off the campaign, the Partnership coordinated a three-site hiring event throughout western Connecticut in September of 2021 that involved 28 local manufacturing companies and attracted 70 job seekers interested solely in manufacturing. The events were held in Waterbury, Danbury, and Winsted. The next day the partnership will be holding an event on the 31st of this month, which will be exclusive to manufacturing leaders, and will take place at Unimetal. The participants will be able to tour the plant, and a big thank you to George LaCapra for allowing us this opportunity. The tour will be followed by a reception at Clocktown Brewing Company with Paul Lavoie, who was appointed Connecticut's Chief Manufacturing Officer in February of this year, and is very supportive of these RSPs. The healthcare partnership is still very much in its infant stages, as our initial launch had been scheduled to be held in January, and due to the recent uprise of Covid cases had to be postponed until late March. As of current, the healthcare partnership is comprised of 9 co-chairs, led by a team of the region's top healthcare executives from organizations including St. Mary's Hospital, Staywell Health, and Nuvance Health. Our launch meeting for the healthcare RSP will also take place on March 31st at Founder's Hall of Naugatuck Valley Community College, and we have a comprehensive list of industry partners that we have reached out to join the partnership, with hopes for their commitment to attend the launch meeting at the end of March. The Partnership will work on top priorities for ensuring the industry has the talent and other assets needed to thrive in the region. Coinciding with the launch of Northwest Connecticut's Healthcare Sector Partnership, industry leaders along with local institutions worked with the Governor's Office of Workforce Strategy to compete in the Good Jobs Challenge, a recently created federal grant program to support sector

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**NORTHWEST REGIONAL  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

FIRST JOB | NEXT JOB | BEST JOB

partnerships nationwide, and the application was successfully submitted in February: \$2.3 million for manufacturing and \$2.6 million for healthcare.

C. Awwad thanked G. LaCapra for hosting the manufacturing RSP at the end of the month, and the NRWIB is looking forward to it. C. Awwad reported to the Board that as far as the compliance monitoring for the CT DOL, the documentation was submitted to the federal government on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and they are currently reviewing those files. The week of April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022, through April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the NRWIB will undergo the federal monitoring process, virtually.

The reports were accepted by the Board of Directors as submitted.

**3. Approval of Contract #: WRR-40420-12098-22-4475 with the Department of Labor for rapid response dollars in the amount of \$350,350.00**

A motion to approve was made by G. LaCapra and seconded by W. Pizzuto. Motion approved.

**4. Approval of NCCI/WCCI Job Funnel Contract JF-21-001 with Industrial Management & Training Institute in the amount of \$35,844.00**

A motion to approve was made by W. Pizzuto and seconded by B. Dupont. Motion approved.

**5. Approval of various policies and procedures:**

**a. Asset Management Policy**

**b. Data Retention Policy**

**c. Disaster Recovery Plan**

**d. Revision to Accounting & Financial Policies and Procedures Manual**

A motion to approve was made by J. Ryan and seconded by G. LaCapra. Motion approved.

**6. Discussion regarding Industry Sector Strategy Committees**

No motion necessary.

**7. Financial Report**

S. Mertz gave the Board a financial update. A motion to receive and place on file was made G. LaCapra and seconded by W. Pizzuto. Motion approved.

**8. Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

**9. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by W. Pizzuto and seconded by J. Vrabely at 12:45pm. Motion approved.

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