



Innovative Workforce Solutions

WORKFORCE ARIZONA COUNCIL

Q4 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 12th 2025 | 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Virtual Meeting

Zoom Information

Meeting ID: 814 5568 7758 Passcode: 557163

1. Call to Order

Chairman Mark Gaspers welcomed Executive Committee members and the public to the Executive Committee meeting. Reminding those attending that only members of the Executive Committee are permitted to vote and to be respectful and remember to mute your microphones.

2. Roll Call

Giselle Retana conducted a roll call, a quorum was present.

Attending: Chairman Mark Gaspers, Vice-Chair John Walters, Second Vice-Chair Michelle Bolton, Beverly Wilson, Kristen Mackey, Alex Horvath, Jenna Rowell and Angie Rodgers as Delegate for Director Michael Wisheart (Absent: Karla Moran)

3. Call to the Public

Chairman Gaspers opened the call to the public with Joel Millman, Executive Director of Pinal County's local workforce development board requesting to speak. Mr. Millman expressed that as the state workforce plan undergoes its required two-year modification, corresponding guidance and timelines for local workforce development area planning are also prioritized and communicated concurrently. This coordination would allow local areas adequate time to align their own plans with state directives and ensure a smooth, timely planning process. Chair Gaspers acknowledged and appreciated the request.

4. Approval of minutes from Q3 August 14th, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting

Chairman Gaspers noted that this agenda item will not be presented nor voted on during this meeting and instead will be held and moved to the next meeting agenda to vote and approve the correct meeting minutes given the error on the year.

5. Welcome: New OEO Leadership

Chairman Gaspers welcomed Mary Foote to the Executive Committee as the new OEO Director and allowed for her to provide a short introduction about herself.

6. Governance and Compliance

Governance and Compliance Advisor Deseret Romero provided the Executive Committee with a presentation on Pima County's Job Center Certification for their new center and a few updates on pending local board recertifications.

a. LWDB Job Center Certification (NEW CENTER), Vote

• Pima County

The Pima County Workforce Investment Board recently moved their ARIZONA@WORK Comprehensive Center to a new location at 1010 W. Miracle Mile Rd in Tucson, to which Pima County completed the Job Center Certification assessment of this new location. This new Comprehensive Center is replacing their Rio Nuevo location on Commerce Park Loop. With

the assessment completion at this new location, Council staff recommend the Job Center Certification for Pima County's Northwest Service Center location.

MOTION: Chairman Gaspers called for a motion to approve the recommended Pima County Workforce Investment Board's new Northwest Service Center - Job Certification to the Full Council for consideration. Vice-Chair John Walters made a motion; Alex Horvath seconded the motion.

All in Favor Vote Held:

In Favor: Chairman Mark Gaspers, Vice-Chair John Walters, Second Vice-Chair Michelle Bolton, Kristen Mackey, Alex Horvath, Jenna Rowell, Beverly Wilson and Angie Rodgers as Delegate for Director Michel Wisheart (Absent: Karla Moran)

Opposed:

Motion Passed

b. 2025 Recertification Update

- **Northeastern Arizona**
- **Coconino County**
- **Arizona Tribal Workforce**

The presentation focused on the status of pending Local Workforce Development Board recertifications, focusing on three areas: Northeastern Arizona, Coconino County, and the Arizona Tribal Workforce Development Boards.

LWDB Recertification Overview

Local Workforce Development Board recertification process, which requires all Arizona boards to complete a two-year review by submitting key governance, compliance, and operational documents. The recertification process is designed to ensure oversight, transparency, and adherence to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) regulations. Emphasis was placed on the importance of maintaining strong governance and fiscal accountability, as well as reinforcing public trust through compliance and effective board operations. Required submissions include documentation related to board membership, financial management, service provider agreements, policy development, and compliance with open meeting laws, ensuring that local boards continue to operate effectively within WIOA guidelines.

LWDB Pending Recertification Updates

While nine of the twelve local boards have been approved, these remaining boards are experiencing delays due to governance and administrative challenges. Council staff reported that Gila County leadership has expressed interest in separating from the Northeastern Arizona Workforce Development Board, prompting a pause in that board's recertification while technical assistance will be provided to clarify processes and determine next steps. In Coconino County, recent leadership changes, including the removal of the board chair and executive director, along with compliance concerns, have led to a formal review by Council staff; recommendations for recertification will be deferred until the review is complete. The Arizona Tribal Workforce Development Board's recertification has been delayed by challenges in securing a fiscal agent, which resulted in staffing and management disruptions. However, with the Office of Economic Opportunity assuming the fiscal agent role in late 2024, progress has been made through technical assistance meetings, updated bylaws, finalized policies, and near completion of required agreements and the local plan. Council staff affirmed that services remain operational in these areas and committed to ongoing updates and support to ensure all boards achieve full compliance and successful recertification.

7. Workforce Arizona Council Annual Report

Janice Garza, Workforce Policy Manager, presented to the Executive Committee the Workforce Arizona Council Annual Report. The discussion focused on the presentation and review process of the Council's

annual report, which is statutorily required to be submitted by December 1 to the Governor, legislative leaders, and the Joint Legislative Budget Committee. The report outlines statewide workforce performance across all four WIOA titles, including disaggregated data on individuals with barriers to employment and a new metric on services to employers. Council staff noted delays in obtaining Title II data due to vendor and data access issues but indicated that updates would be incorporated once received.

Committee members expressed concern about approving the report before reviewing the complete document, leading to the withdrawal of a motion for conditional approval. It was agreed that the draft report would be shared with all members within 24 hours for review and made available for full Council discussion next week, rather than being placed on the consent agenda. Members also emphasized the importance of ensuring the report's accessibility for individuals with disabilities and improving the timeline for review in future reporting cycles.

8. Workgroup Updates

- a. Training Effectiveness**
- b. Continuous Improvement**
- c. Increasing Apprentices**

Janice Garza provided an update on the Workforce Arizona Council's active workgroups, which have recently held kickoff meetings and begun project work for the program year. The Training Effectiveness Workgroup met on October 20 to review membership, time commitments, and charter revisions, as well as discuss updates to the HIT dashboard and data improvements. The Continuous Improvement Workgroup met on October 30, emphasizing collaboration with local area executive directors and reviewing a project on recapture and reallocation policy to strengthen statewide workforce objectives and fiscal oversight. This policy aims to establish clear guidance and checks and balances between the Council and DES on the use of recaptured funds, ensuring accountability while supporting efficient spending. Council members commended the partnership among DES, OEO, and the Council for developing a balanced, effective approach. Additionally, the Increasing Apprentices Workgroup held its kickoff meeting on November 3, focusing on employer engagement, developing a unified messaging strategy for business service representatives, and creating data-driven policy recommendations to expand apprenticeships. Workgroup Executive Sponsors will provide progress updates at future full Council meetings.

9. Agency Updates:

a. OEO: Director Mary Foote

OEO Director Mary Foote shared the following updates:

- **Workforce Arizona Summit: Recap and Next Steps**

A recap and the anticipated next steps of the successful 2025 Workforce Summit and planning for the 2026 event. Highlights included strong attendance, engaging sessions on labor market, economic, and demographic trends, and positive feedback about those expert-led discussions. Planning for the 2026 Summit is underway, with a tentative date in early June and a forthcoming survey to gather input on preferred session formats and topics, such as data analysis, policy discussions, and case studies.

- **2024 - 2034 Industry Employment Projections**

An update on employment projections, noting that while recent jobs reports have been delayed due to the federal government shutdown, a new 10-year employment projection report will be released shortly, outlining industry growth trends and areas of potential decline across Arizona's economy.

b. DES: Assistant Director Division of Employment And Rehabilitation Services, Anna Hunter

DES Assistant Director for the Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services, Anna Hunter provided the Committee updates related to recaptured and reallocated funds, unemployment insurance benefits, rapid response efforts, and the TEGL 02-25: Industry-Driven Skills Training Fund Grant Program.

- **Recapture & Reallocation**

It was reported that approximately \$1.7 million in funds were recaptured for Program Year 2023/Fiscal Year 2024, with \$1.5 million coming from tribal areas, highlighting concerns about underutilized tribal allocations.

- **Unemployment Insurance Benefits**

The Department of Economic Security (DES) provided updates on the newly launched CACTUS unemployment insurance portal, which has processed over 179,000 claims and distributed nearly \$37 million in benefits, despite operational challenges stemming from federal funding cuts and a 60% staff reduction.

- **Rapid Response Update**

Updates were also shared on the state's Rapid Response process, which supports employers and employees during layoffs through coordinated local engagement and services.

- **TEGL 02-25: Industry-Driven Skills Training Fund Grant Program**

Additionally, Arizona received a \$5 million federal grant under the Industry-Driven Skills Training Fund, focusing on advanced manufacturing training in Maricopa County, the City of Phoenix, and Pinal County, benefitting over 1,100 participants.

Overall, Council members discussed optimizing fund use, ensuring alignment between local and state priorities, and addressing the high level of unspent tribal funds through improved technical assistance and potential policy collaboration with tribal partners.

10. Adjournment

Chairman Gaspers provided the following reminders for upcoming meetings and then called for a motion to adjourn the meeting:

- Thursday, November 20, 2025: Full Council Meeting. This meeting will be in person and available via Zoom. The in-person location will be at: 1700 W. Washington Street, Room 200, Phoenix 85007
- Thursday, February 12, 2026: Executive Committee Meeting. This meeting will be held virtual via Zoom.

MOTION:

Chair Gaspers called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jenna Rowel made a motion; Vice-Chair John Walters seconded the motion.

All in Favor Vote Held:

In Favor: Chair Mark Gaspers, Vice-Chair John Walters, Second Vice-Chair Michelle Bolton, Angie Rodgers as Delegate to Director Michael Wisehart, Beverly Wilson, Kristen Mackey, Alex Horvath and Jenna Rowell (Absent: Karla Moran)

Opposed: None

Motion Passed