

**Phoenix Business and Workforce Development
Board
Meeting Minutes
March 12, 2026 – 9:00 a.m.**

Board Members Present:

Janice Bradford
Christian Bearden
Karen Carter
Kristin Emery
Lorraine Field
Patrick Fitzhugh (Chair)
Kaaren-Lyn Graves
Wallin Gustin

Scott Holman
Stephanie Rimmer
Brandon Ramsey
Alison Rapping
Claudia Reilly
Jason Schaffner
Dean Scheinert
Sam Wolo

Board Members Absent

Daniel Barajas
Neda Boyce
Karen Carter
Mavrick Knoles
Ginger Lane
Jesús Love
Meghan McGilvra
Drew Trojanowski

Public Attendees:

Ashley
Gregg Bach
Eddie Barojas
Erica Bennett
Dominic Cota
RM Coulon
Sandra Enriquez
Diana Figueroa
Thomas Flynn
Matalie Hastings
Mari Hicks
LaSetta Hogans
Eric Johnson
Christina Lira

Delsy Maldonado
Hayden Maynard
Krista McGarvey
Lisa Mirabile
James Montoya
Gustavo Nava
Jovana Parkhouse
Angie Parra
Demitria Robles
Rebecca Tierney
Ariadna Valentin
Justin West
Laura Whitehead

1. Call to Order:

Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board (Board) Chair Patrick Fitzhugh called the March 12, 2026, Board Meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Roll call was completed and a quorum of 15 members were present.

2. Approval of the January 8, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes:

A motion to approve the January 8, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes was made by Board Member Christian Bearden and seconded by Board Member Ginger Lane.

Approved: Kristin Emery, Pearl Esau, Lorraine Field, Patrick Fitzhugh, Kaaren-Lyn Graves, Wallin Gustin, Brandon Ramsey, Alison Rapping, Claudia Reilly, Stephanie Rimmer, Jason Schaffner, Dean Scheinert, and Sam Wolo

Opposed: None

Motion passed

3. Chair Update:

Board Chair Patrick Fitzhugh provided a Board Chair Update:

- Wallin Gustin, new Board Member introduced himself and shared he's been with the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) for 31 years and is honored to be part of the Board. He will be representing Title III.
- Brenda Sipe, new Board Member introduced herself and shared she's the Associate Vice President for Workforce Development at Northern Arizona State University. She oversees continuing education, noncredit training, workforce research team and educational partnerships.
- Board Strategic Planning sessions are scheduled for May 18 and 19. The two-day event will be hosted by Board Member Karen Carter at Terros Health. Board Members unable to attend are encouraged to share their feedback in advance to ensure their voices are heard. More information will be emailed to help guide the discussions during the sessions.
- Board Members were encouraged to attend and participate in the next Community of Practice event focused on skilled trades and apprenticeships in April.
- To ensure meeting quorum is met, Board Members are advised to reply to emails sent by Angie, Ariadna and Hayden. Board Member Alison Rapping asked if the meeting agendas will be sent via email. Board Liaison Hayden Maynard confirmed that agendas will be emailed. Patrick added that the meeting agenda is also attached to the Outlook meeting invite.
- National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) is hosting a virtual policy power up session on April 24. NAWB lobbyists will be updating members about different grant opportunities, upcoming federal hearings,

and any progress on reauthorization.

- Board attendance was shared and reviewed. Patrick thanked Board members for commitment to attending the Board meetings with an overall attendance rate of 84%.

4. Board Committee Updates:

- Align Investment Steering Committee Chair (AISC) Stephanie Rimmer shared the committee is working on finalizing a diagram and braided program to be shared with the Board at the next meeting. AISC's current barrier is the limited timeframe to accomplish remaining goals on the current Strategic Plan before the next starts. Last month, the committee reviewed the budget report and performance measures. Stephanie shared the committee prefers a more detailed budget report and decided to return to using the format that was used by former Board Chair Sam Wolo. The committee is seeking new ideas for braided funding.
- Instill Hope Steering Committee Chair (IHSC) Vice Chair Jason Schaffner provided an update on the Community of Practice convening focused on Advanced Business Services championed by Board Member Daniel Barajas. The convening was held on February 26 at Paradise Valley Community College. Jason highlighted the meaningful conversations that took place between industry leaders and workforce partners, addressing the evolving landscape due to technological advancements and changing workforce dynamics. He said labor market insights were shared, employer perspectives on workforce needs and talent pipeline development. Employers shared their challenges with filling mid-level positions, particularly as experienced workers retire. They also noted that a high turnover in entry-level roles makes it difficult to build a strong internal pipeline for advancement into the mid-level roles. Employers stressed the importance of life skills, communication, and social-emotional competencies for employee success and growth. Although workforce partners are making significant progress in these areas, the development efforts are still not meeting employer's needs. Additionally, Jason shared this is an opportunity to bridge the gap between employee life skills and supervisor readiness. Addressing this challenge could improve entry-level retention and strengthen internal talent pipelines that will enable employers to fill roles internally rather than seeking external solutions. Jason shared the next Community of Practice convening scheduled for April and June.
- National Model for Mobility Steering Committee Chair (NMMSC) and Vice Chair could not attend the meeting and a slide with their committee updates was shared with the Board. Patrick shared the committee is working on career pathway development, Skills First Hiring and workforce readiness. Board Member Alison Rapping shared she serves in this committee and wanted to add that the committee is making progress with understanding and identifying barriers and gaps to ensure career

pathways are built particularly for those with barriers.

5. Consent Agenda:

Board Chair Patrick Fitzhugh presented the consent agenda, items on the consent agenda are meant for updates and approval only, and they are usually approved with a single vote.

The consent agenda was:

- Adopt policy updates 300.301 – Youth Supportive Services

Board Member Christian Bearden made a motion to approve the consent agenda and Board Member Alison Rapping seconded the motion.

Approved: Kristin Emery, Pearl Esau, Lorraine Field, Patrick Fitzhugh, Kaaren-Lyn Graves, Wallin Gustin, Ginger Lane, Brandon Ramsey, Alison Rapping, Claudia Reilly, Stephanie Rimmer, Jason Schaffner, Dean Scheinert, and Sam Wolo

Abstained: None

Opposed: None

Motion passed

6. Business Services Regional Meeting Update:

ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix Project Manager James Montoya provided an update on the regional business services collaboration between the Maricopa County, Arizona Department of Economic Security, and Pinal County held on February 18. James highlighted the strong regional collaboration, especially with Maricopa County, which has been recognized with the 2025 Arizona Association of Economic Development Golden Prospect award for their regional collaboration in response to a massive layoff last year. During the meeting, each region provided an overview of their services, which allowed staff to discuss and learn more about business services. Each region also shared their employer engagement strategies. The City of Phoenix showcased its use of LinkedIn Recruiter to expand outreach strategies – no other region has this capability. Additionally, the Mobile Career Unit was also highlighted as innovative community engagement tool.

James also shared post-survey results, 7 out of 24 participants rated the meeting 3.86 out of 5 stars, appreciating in-person connections for building strong relationships. Some of suggestions for improvement included holding meetings twice a year and extending networking opportunities. There was a strong interest in learning more about labor market information and employer outreach strategies, along with a desire for increased collaboration and sharing of best practices among the regions. Overall, attendees were satisfied and recognized the value of collaborating to build stronger networks, with an emphasis on strategic planning. As a result, a comprehensive list was finalized

for regional connection. This list includes contact information for individuals in various industries across different regions, which facilitates easier networking for employers. Board Member Kaaren-Lyn Graves acknowledged and thanked James for helping several of her clients and appreciated the work he does.

7. Strategic Planning Update:

Board Liaison Hayden Maynard provided an update about the development of the Board's 2026-2029 Strategic Plan. Hayden shared strategic planning is a structured process that will guide the Board towards its future objectives by aligning with its mission, vision, goals and resources, essential creating a flexible roadmap to adapt to changes and challenges. A strategic plan provides a shared roadmap for the Board, Board staff, and workforce system stakeholders, identifying opportunities, challenges, and priorities that will guide decision-making over the next three years. This plan is a continuous process of learning, prioritizing, and adapting to changes in the labor market and insights gained during implementation. By ensuring the Board remains proactive and aligns around long-term goals and measurable outcomes, the plan helps avoid mission drift and scattered efforts. It strengthens accountability through clear goals, timelines, and success indicators.

Board Member Scott Holman joined the meeting at 9:35am.

A two-day strategic planning retreat is planned for May 18 and 19 at Terros Healthcare. A timeline was shared to show activities planned for the development of the Strategic Plan. Hayden shared that a pre-survey was sent out in December 2025 to Board Members and Board staff. The Strategic Plan is expected to be finalized and presented to the Board at the September 2026 meeting. Hayden shared survey feedback that will be used to develop the strategic planning session:

PRE-SURVEY FEEDBACK

- Board viewed a strong convener and listener
- Execution and accountability gaps
- Data and impact measurement need strengthening
- Readiness for sharper prioritization

41

Hayden also reviewed the guiding documents that will be used to develop the Strategic Plan include but not limited to the current 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, Small Business Roadmap, Environmental Workforce Scan and Survey and American's Talent Strategy etc.

Additionally, Hayden shared the outcomes the Board can expect at the conclusion of the planning sessions and include Strategic Planning, Implementation Plan, Visual Tracker, Meeting framework and Stakeholder convening. She concluded the presentation by highlighting the importance of Board's in the development of the strategic planning:

BOARD'S ROLE

- Bring your experience
- Help define the future vision
- Surface risks and opportunities
- Support alignment
- Serve as champions



Board Chair Patrick Fitzhugh called on Board Member Sam Wolo to share any about his experience with the last strategic planning cycle. Sam emphasized the importance of having a clear vision for what success looks like. He suggested focusing on what should be started, stopped, and continued to achieve the desired goals. Board Executive Director LaSetta Hogans echoed Sam's advice. She emphasized a key takeaway that was noted with Board participation with developing the strategic plan, people tend to forget the rationale behind the set goals by the second year of a three-year plan. To address this, it's advised to maintain clarity and relevance when setting goals and actions to ensure they remain meaningful and effective in the future.

Board Member Alison Rapping shared that she believes the City of Phoenix and the state of Arizona are in a unique place because of its regional economic growth and business-friendly environment. She wanted to ensure that the Strategic Plan addresses how the Board will be leveraging local and state governance to address workforce needs in the future. Board Member Dean Scheinert advised that the Board avoid complacency to ensure the Strategic Plan addresses current and future economic realities. Patrick highlighted the importance of focusing on talent strategies to anticipate future developments, such as shifts in national workforce policy, industry trends, and local business demands in Phoenix. He agreed that the need for proactive planning is the right direct to avoid complacency and prepare for potential challenges, as well as the importance of collaboration with industry partners to gather insights into their priorities for the next two to three years.

8. Call to the Public:

None.

9. Future Agenda Items:

None.

10. Adjournment:

PBWD Board Chair Patrick Fitzhugh adjourned the meeting at 09:58 a.m.

DRAFT