



**Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board
Executive Leadership Committee Meeting Minutes
April 9, 2026: 9 a.m.**

Committee Members Present:

Karen Carter	Brandon Ramsey (Vice-Chair)
Patrick Fitzhugh (Chair)	Stephanie Rimmer
Scott Holman	Jason Schaffner
Meghan McGilvra	Sam Wolo

Public Attendees:

Gregg Bach	Hayden Maynard
Erica Bennett	James Montoya
Diana Figueroa	Gustavo Nava
Thomas Flynn	Jovanna Parkhouse
Mari Hicks	Demitria Robles
LaSetta Hogans	Rebecca Tierney
Delsy Maldonado	Stephanie Varela
Luis Marquez	Laura Whitehead

Action items taken are noted in **bold** print.

1. Call to Order/ Roll Call and Introductions:

The Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board (Board) Executive Leadership Committee (ELC) Chair Patrick Fitzhugh called the April 9, 2026 Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board (Board) ELC Meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Roll call was completed with a quorum of seven members in attendance.

2. Approval of Minutes for ELC February 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes:

A motion to approve the February 12, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes was made by ELC Member Karen Carter and seconded by ELC Member Stephanie Rimmer.

Approved: Patrick Fitzhugh (Chair), Meghan McGilvra, Brandon Ramsey (Vice-Chair), Jason Schaffner, and Sam Wolo.

Opposed: None

Motion passed

3. Board Chair Updates:

ELC Chair Patrick Fitzhugh shared his Board Chair update. The Board Chair highlights included:

- A National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) webinar on the FY 2027 President's budget would be held after the ELC meeting. He encouraged members to attend if they were able.
- The Central Arizona Regional Workforce Webinar Series would continue April 21 with Board members Meghan McGilvra and Kristin Emery participating. He encouraged members to attend if they were able.
- He reminded members that the Board strategic planning session would be May 18-19 at Terros Health, courtesy of Board Member Karen Carter.

Patrick shared that he, along with Karen and ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix Workforce Supervisor Rebecca Tierney, attended the NAWB conference in Las Vegas in March. He invited them to share their thoughts on the conference.

Patrick shared his key takeaways were utilizing innovative data capture and use it to drive programming, supporting durable sectors, and that the Board needs to take ownership in driving actions. Rebecca shared that a key takeaway for her was that boards need to elevate their storytelling. Patrick agreed that he feels that storytelling needs to be combined with data, because businesses are data driven. Rebecca said that there was discussion in most sessions about Artificial Intelligence (AI). Patrick shared that businesses are incorporating AI quickly and the Board needs to strategize on how to support the white-collar workers who may be displaced. He mentioned that in other countries, children are being introduced to AI in elementary school so they are familiar with it and know how to use it as they enter the workforce and this needs to be incorporated into the story as the Board works to support workers that need upskilling and how to make sure that they continue to support and upskill the underserved populations. Additionally, Rebecca mentioned how AI can be used to help people with disabilities to enter the workforce.

Karen shared that she attended a session that focused on how the Board can engage with legislators to raise the profile of the Board and needing to get a champion who speaks to workforce in their legislative bodies. She also shared that most of the boards she spoke to shared how their boards were trying to generate additional revenue to support programming. Karen shared that a key takeaway from a strategic planning session she attended was that the Board needs to ensure they engage in contingency planning, to plan for the worst in strategic planning. Patrick shared that some states showed tremendous growth in education and workforce, due in large part to employers and business leading the charge in a unified approach.

Scott Holman joined the meeting at 9:16 a.m.

4. Board Steering Committee Updates:

- **Align Investment Steering Committee (AISC) Updates:** AISC Chair Stephanie Rimmer shared that the AISC is in the process of finalizing a diagram for pursuing braided funding. She shared that primary barrier to concluding their work is the short timeframe until the current strategic plan timeline comes to an end. She shared that at their last meeting, the AISC reviewed the Board budget as well as more in-depth reporting related to Measurable Skills gains and credential attainment. Stephanie shared that the only strategic that is not green for the AISC is related to braided funding and having a model in place. ELC Chair Patrick Fitzhugh asked what the key barriers are to developing a model. Stephanie shared that the key barrier is not developing a model that is not workable for Board staff.
- **Instill Hope Steering Committee (IHSC) Updates:** IHSC Chair Karen Carter shared the upcoming Community of Practice will be held on April 30, focused on skilled trades and apprenticeships. She asked that Board members attend at least one session of the Community of Practice and that there be employer engagement if members know of any employers that should be involved in the series. ELC Vice-Chair Brandon Ramsey asked who is invited. ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix Project Manager James Montoya shared that the invites are shared to a list of about 250 people who are training or workforce service providers. City of Phoenix Community and Economic Development Data and Marketing Manager Gregg Bach shared that the events are shared to the community calendar and can be shared via social media if there's interest in that. Patrick asked if any of the chambers are invited. James shared that there are chambers of commerce who are invited. IHSC Vice-Chair Jason Schaffner said that the committee had started discussing topics that can engage the whole community and the topic with the most support seemed to be retention. Karen shared that with the industry labor market reports being updated, they are on track for all goals.
- **National Model for Mobility Steering Committee (NMMSC):** NMMSC Chair Meghan McGilvra shared that the committee is still reviewing the model infographic for career pathways to give good information to people considering moving into a new career. She said the committee is stalled on the workforce readiness initiatives. They have approved the objectives but have not been able to test which delivery model is strongest. She shared that the newest NMMSC Member Kristin Emery has offered to share data with the committee to inform their work. Meghan said the committee is interested in moving their career pathway work forward into the next strategic plan.

Stephanie Rimmer left the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

5. Training Services Policies:

ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix Project Manager James Montoya shared information about proposed changes to two policies:

- 600.604: Incumbent Worker Training
- 600.605: On-the-Job Training

James shared that the policies were updated because they needed to be streamlined and aligned with state policies. He explained that Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) is an employer reimbursement grant aimed at upskilling existing full-time employees. Reimbursement amounts vary based on employer size, and employer contributions can include in-kind support. On-the-Job Training (OJT) supports new hires by reimbursing employers for a percentage of wages during onboarding and training. Both programs are designed to increase worker skills while supporting business competitiveness.

He shared proposed updates to the IWT Policy:

- Page 1: Added multiple definitions to ensure consistency and understanding across staff and employers. These include Business Services Team, Incumbent Worker, IRAP, Registered Apprenticeship Program, and Related Technical Instruction.
- Page 2: Added employer responsibility to provide employee start dates. This was requested by Board staff to clarify documentation requirements.
- Page 3: Renamed the former “Business Customer Eligibility” section to “Employer Application and Requirements” for accuracy.
- Page 4: Clarified how the IWT Assessment Rubric will be used, especially when funding is limited.
- Page 4: Added a new apprenticeship section. This clarifies that IWT funds may support apprenticeships, and identifies eligibility and required documentation.
- Page 4: Also increased the maximum funding per employee to \$5,000, aligning with existing training authorization policies.
- Page 4: The language around issuing a second contract was updated to allow more flexibility—meaning a second contract may be issued even if the first hasn't fully exhausted its maximum funding, as long as outcomes have been met.
- Pages 5–7: Added the Industry Skills Grant section. This outlines purpose, funding structure, employer match requirements, eligibility, and allowable training activities.

James shared proposed removals from the IWT Policy:

- Page 3: Removed language restricting IWT use when employers already had internal training programs. Removed the wage-increase requirement from the Training Criteria section for consistency with earlier edits.
- Page 4: Removed outdated essential skills language that no longer aligns with Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) requirements.
- Page 5: Removed the requirement to track wage increases in performance reporting, aligning with removal of the wage increase requirement. While this is removed as a requirement for consistency with removing the wage increase requirement to enter an IWT contract, the Business Services team will still be able to track these outcomes via traditional AJC tracking. Remaining edits were minor grammatical and formatting updates to improve consistency.

James shared that public comment is open until April 21, 2026 and that all businesses who have previously participated in work-based learning contracts have been notified of the public comment period. ELC Vice-Chair Brandon Ramsey said that he thinks any changes that will reduce the barriers to using services is good. ELC Member Sam Wolo said that when the policy is shared with the Board, staff may want to share how it will improve the experience for the end user.

ELC Vice Chair Brandon Ramsey made a motion recommend the proposed changes pending public comment to 600.604 – Incumbent Worker Training Policy and ELC Member Jason Schaffner seconded the motion.

Approved: Karen Carter, Patrick Fitzhugh, Scott Holman, Meghan McGilvra, and Sam Wolo.

Opposed: None

Motion passed.

James shared proposed updates to the OJT Policy:

- Pages 1–2: Updated worker criteria to ensure full DES and WIOA alignment. This includes eligibility, documentation, priority of service, full-time employment requirements, and consumer-choice language.
- Page 2: Clarified that employers must be located within Maricopa County.
- Added clearer application and employer agreement requirements, including written training plans and prohibitions related to union organizing and labor disputes.
- Page 3: Updated wage requirements to reflect current minimum wage

standards.

- Page 4: Increased the per-employee funding limit to \$5,000, added contract duration, clarified ETPL exemptions, and added employer retention expectations.
- Added new performance reporting requirements for tracking training completion and post-training employment outcomes.

James shared information about proposed removals from the OJT policy: Language describing how OJT reimbursement works was removed from the purpose section because it's already clearly stated later in the policy. All other edits were minor formatting and grammar updates for consistency.

The public comment period is open through April 21, 2026 and employers who have engaged in work-based learning previously have been given the opportunity to comment.

ELC Member Karen Carter made a motion recommend the proposed changes pending public comment to 600.605 – On-the-Job Training Policy and ELC Member Scott Holman seconded the motion.

Approved: Patrick Fitzhugh, Meghan McGilvra, Brandon Ramsey, and Sam Wolo.

Opposed: None

Motion passed.

6. Member Roster and Board Member Engagement:

ELC Vice-Chair Brandon Ramsey shared a roster he developed with Board staff that shares information about the strengths and expertise of each Board member to help members know who they can lean on when developing initiatives. ELC Chair Patrick asked members if they would be comfortable using the document and potentially having it publicly posted. He shared the document could be used to market who the Board is on social media and what they do.

7. Call the Public and Open Discussion:

None

8. Future Agenda Items:

- Data storytelling strategy

9. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m.