

**STATE OF NEVADA
GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

MINUTES OF STRATEGIC PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, June 11, 2025 – 2:00 p.m.

Audio Conference Number: +1 775-321-6111

Phone Conference ID: 776 467 161#

Members Present

Nancy Olsen, Chair
Edward Estipona, Vice Chair
Natalie Brown
Brett Miller
David Schmidt
Chair Soderberg, GWDB Chair
Michael Yoder

Absent

Drazen Elez
Milt Stewart
Dr. Tiffany Tyler Garner

Others present

Kamalisha Green
Armando Leiva
Elaine Rodriguez
Tiffany Vazquez

1. CALL TO ORDER - OPENING REMARKS

Vice Chair Estipona called the meeting to order

2. ROLL CALL - CONFIRMATION OF A QUORUM

Tiffany Vazquez took roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

3. VERIFICATION OF PUBLIC NOTICE POSTING

Tiffany Vazquez verified that the meeting had been publicly posted pursuant to Nevada Open Meeting Law, NRS 241.020.

4. FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

There were none.

5. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – Approval of March 12, 2025, meeting minutes

Vice Chair Estipona called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes. **It was moved by Chair Olsen and seconded by David Schmidt. Chair Soderberg abstained. The motion carried.**

6. DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ONLY – Review of feedback on proposed revisions to goal 1 – Population, in the Strategic Plan

Chair Olsen acknowledged Michael Yoder and Armando Leiva for submitting their revisions and comments on the goals and strategies of Population and Engagement in the Strategic Plan.

Strategy 1 - Awareness of public workforce system to underserved communities

- Action Item 1 – Shared Calendar
- Action Item 2 – Tracking effectiveness of job fairs

Michael Yoder suggested enhancing data metrics by including additional demographic categories such as age (youth or adult), zip codes, gender, and ethnicity. These data points are critical for accurately measuring outcomes related to disconnected youth and identifying disproportionate unemployment among specific demographic groups. This information supports compliance with certain legislative requirements and eligibility for relevant grants.

Armando Leiva added attempts to create a shared calendar have been made multiple times without lasting success. Key challenges include determining which agency will host and maintain the calendar and ensuring accessibility for all system partners. For maximum effectiveness, the calendar should also be made public so program clients can view upcoming opportunities.

Vice Chair Estipona provided an update on DETR's current efforts to improve the EmployNV system. DETR is developing a new, user-friendly informational website to sit in front of the existing job posting system, which has been challenging to navigate. He mentioned DETR has expressed willingness to host a shared calendar for system partners. Posting permissions and protocols can be determined by the group, with possible involvement from Chambers of Commerce in the north and south. He also said that DETR is already conducting marketing campaigns aimed at driving traffic to the site for job seekers and employers.

Chair Olsen requested to have John Parel speak at the next meeting to address what the shell is going to look like. She raised a recurring concern about the fragmentation of information across multiple websites, each offering different details about available services. There is currently no single, comprehensive website that clearly outlines all services provided under WIOA. It was suggested that the development of DETR's new informational shell website could be an opportunity to address this issue. The group should consider whether this new platform could serve as a centralized hub for system-wide services information, making it easier for individuals to access and understand what is available to them. She also mentioned the limitations on marketing activities due to funding restrictions within various budgets, the idea of creating one centralized website for the entire workforce system (DETR website may be more practical and stable compared to OWINN since there have been many changes), and a lack of a coordinated effort to build legislative support for WIOA services.

Armando Leiva clarified the concept of the "Wrong Door" approach as a means for clients to access services from multiple agencies through one or several coordinated entry points, such as online platforms, welfare offices, career hubs, or affiliated nonprofits. It was noted that while multi-agency co-location has already been established in certain areas, clients still experience duplication of effort. Specifically, they are often required to complete multiple applications across different websites and interact with various staff members, which undermines the efficiency of the system. The discussion highlighted the need to expand the co-location and coordination model to underserved geographic areas, including Mesquite, Laughlin, and Boulder City. Additionally, there was recognition of the importance of providing specialized assistance to certain demographics, with particular emphasis on the refugee and asylum-seeker populations, who require tailored partnerships and services to effectively meet their unique needs.

Brett Miller emphasized the concept of "wrong door" as not only co-location of services but also as an effective referral process that ensures a client is connected to the right service in one attempt. Given that full integration across agencies is unlikely, and services will continue to be delivered in different locations, the key priority is developing and documenting a reliable referral system. This referral process should be a core component of both the Access framework and the "No Wrong Door" approach to improve coordination and client experience. The referral system should fall under access or integration. He sees awareness as outreach and commented that websites tend to be considered "old school."

Vice Chair Estipona added that DETR can encourage general use of this calendar as a centralized resource to keep everyone informed of upcoming events. However, the specific messaging for each job fair remains the responsibility of the individual hosting event and their partners, who will handle outreach via social media.

He emphasized that clear communication among partners about their marketing and outreach efforts is essential to avoid unnecessary overlap and wasted resources. Simplifying the process by focusing first on consolidating events into the calendar and monitoring its effectiveness was suggested as a practical initial step. Building trust in the system through data-driven results will encourage greater buy-in and collaboration among all stakeholders.

David Schmidt centered on the importance of engaging underserved Nevadans where they are, with a particular focus on improving outreach through more effective use of social media. A survey of unemployed individuals across the state showed that EmployNV was not commonly used as a job search tool, raising concerns about directing people to resources that may not be widely trusted or effective. He stressed the need for better communication strategies, particularly on social media platforms, to improve awareness and usage of existing tools like EmployNV and the event calendar. There was consensus that static posts or paid ads alone are insufficient; outreach efforts need to involve organic engagement, including posts that are liked, shared, and commented on by a network of partners and employers.

He suggested strategy was to encourage employers to actively promote their use of the system, helping boost visibility and credibility among job seekers. True active promotion goes beyond simply sharing information—it involves community engagement and amplifying messages within the digital spaces job seekers already occupy. This approach would help build trust in the system and increase its overall effectiveness.

Chair Olsen commented, “I’m wondering if it would ever be possible for the workforce system as a whole to have a PIO”.

Natalie Brown raised an important question regarding the intended audience and purpose of the shared calendar system. Clarification was sought on whether the calendar is primarily for internal coordination among workforce ecosystem partners or if it is meant to be a public-facing tool promoted to job seekers and the broader community. Understanding the direction of the calendar’s use will also guide promotion strategies. She highlighted that all NSHE institutions have social media platforms that could be used for outreach, depending on the target audience and the nature of the message. If the messaging is systemwide and impacts the entire NSHE network, there is capacity to support broader promotion across those institutional channels.

Vice Chair Estipona mentioned EmployNV is updating its front-end to improve usability and prevent confusion, the informational side of the platform will be redesigned to be more user-friendly and searchable. To better target unemployed populations, ZIP code data can be used to deliver geofenced digital marketing messages. EmployNV will also launch broader marketing efforts to raise awareness about the platform. He also mentioned a push to build a digital outreach community via social media. A proposal was made to organize training sessions for partners on how to create and grow a workforce-related online community. He offered support from social media specialists to host learning sessions. Emphasis was placed on starting with individual effort and expanding by involving personal and professional networks.

David Schmidt emphasized the need to identify the platforms our target audience actually uses, noting LinkedIn may not be the most effective. He stressed the importance of tailored content, effective engagement, and team support to better reach and connect with the right people.

Vice Chair Estipona shared that Meta platforms—primarily Facebook and Instagram—are currently the

most effective for reaching key audiences, with Facebook still performing well and Instagram being strong among younger demographics. While TikTok is highly effective, state restrictions limit direct use. However, it's still possible to reach that audience through paid strategies. He emphasized the importance of knowing your audience and using the right tone to successfully capture attention.

Chair Osen raised concerns about limited flexibility in using social media for work-related content, noting that in the Department of Education, all posts require higher-level approval. This often causes delays that make timely sharing of events or good news difficult. She asked if others have more freedom, seeking insight to potentially advocate for more autonomy within their own organization.

Michael Yoder added that welfare has a PIO who reviews and posts on social media.

Vice Chair Estipona explained that social media algorithms tend to favor individual accounts over organizational ones. Posts shared by individuals—such as promoting a job fair—often get more engagement than the same content posted by the organization. He noted that the best results come when individuals post first and the organization then reshapes it, boosting visibility. He emphasized that while there are posting limitations, most challenges can be worked around depending on departmental rules—except for TikTok, which remains restricted.

Chair Olsen reaffirmed that the overall goal of focusing on population remains important. However, the emphasis moving forward should be on strategies and action items. A key question was raised about the value of continuing with the shared calendar. While it will require effort to maintain, DETR has offered to manage it with submissions open to multiple contributors. The group was asked to consider whether to keep the calendar as an action item and how to define and measure its success.

David Schmidt emphasized that consistently updated, user-friendly content—beyond one-time posts like event announcements—is crucial for building ongoing awareness. He highlighted the value of having shareable content that can be regularly refreshed to maintain engagement and effectively raise awareness over time.

Chair Olsen suggested that while DETR would primarily manage the shared calendar, a core group should be established to regularly submit content. The group needs to identify who will be part of this core team.

Vice Chair Estipona highlighted the importance of the website as a central hub where people can get more information after seeing social media posts. The website allows for tracking visitor actions, enabling measurement and data collection. He suggested defining desired action items before building the system to support tracking and retargeting efforts, such as following user behavior on the calendar and partner links. This data helps evaluate both digital and physical engagement, making the website a key tool for measuring impact.

Chair Soderberg noted that the execution team list appears complete but suggested adding a private sector partner. It would align with recent discussions and strengthen the team's structure.

Chair Olsen noted the need to confirm with John P. whether someone at DETR can manage the website or calendar, or if another person should be approached. It may be best to have someone outside the agencies handling this work.

Brett Miller reflected that while Strategy One around building a digital footprint is promising, it lacks clear, actionable direction. He cautioned against relying on tasks like a shared calendar just to check a box and suggested conducting a SWOT analysis to better understand actual needs. They also noted that communication varies across generations and digital tools are evolving rapidly, emphasizing the importance of ensuring website content is relevant and aligned with the group's goals.

Vice Chair Estipona emphasized the importance of starting outreach efforts without waiting for the “perfect” moment, noting that some clients delay action for years due to overanalysis. While acknowledging the need for a deeper SWOT analysis, he stressed the value of identifying short-term, low-hanging fruit that can be acted on now. With AI rapidly changing how people access information—such as Gemini search results and tools like ChatGPT—he encouraged an adaptive, evolving approach. Doing the work in phases now, will also make future reporting easier and more effective. As the group moves forward, collected data will help strengthen the SWOT analysis. He emphasized the importance of gathering the right information to support better decision-making.

Chair Olsen added that while the first action item is the shared calendar, there was general agreement that it should be more than just a basic calendar on a webpage.

David Schmidt agreed and proposed making the action item broader by focusing on improving the workforce system’s digital footprint, including the calendar. He cautioned this could become too large and unfocused, opposing the idea of a SMART goal.

Chair Olsen agreed that the action item should include clear steps, measurement criteria—such as website visits and job fair participation—and a realistic time frame. Concerns were raised about the original timeline being unrealistic, and clarification was requested on the timeline for the EmployNV system rollout.

Vice Chair Estipona shared that the EmployNV system is expected to be completed by mid-fall. They are currently reviewing initial design options, starting with a few pages and expanding based on feedback. There is ample time to incorporate input on what the system should include beyond a calendar, such as serving as a comprehensive job portal that links to workforce partners' websites rather than replacing them. The goal is a unified, efficient system where users can enter through any partner site and still access the full network of resources. He offered to provide expertise and host educational sessions to support partners in this effort, emphasizing collaboration to build a vibrant workforce ecosystem for the state.

Chair Olsen expressed appreciation and raised a concern about including only those in the execution team who have been part of the conversation, rather than committing individuals without prior involvement. She suggested defining the minimum essential entities to include in the team.

Vice Chair Estipona emphasized the importance of including all WIOA titles in the execution team—such as they are key drivers of the state's workforce system. He highlighted existing connections among partners like Workforce Connections, NevadaWorks, Equus, and EmployNV hubs. The recommendation was to involve major external partners such as trade associations, the Las Vegas and Reno-Sparks Chambers, Hispanic chambers, and rural community chambers. For private sector involvement, he suggested a job fair submission form process to ensure legitimacy and maintain quality control.

Chair Olsen pointed out that the second action item overlaps with the first, particularly in measuring job fairs and participation. Should the number of job fairs remain in Action Item 2 or be combined into one item, noting some confusion around the distinction.

David Schmidt suggested keeping the second action item—focused on surveying—separate from the first, but recommended expanding the target audience. He noted that surveying only current participants limits insight into who is being missed. David suggested conducting broader outreach to unemployed individuals and those outside the labor force to understand awareness, barriers, and perceptions of workforce services. While acknowledging this approach is more difficult and costly, they emphasized it could yield the most valuable data for identifying and addressing service gaps.

Vice Chair Estipona suggested leveraging the existing unemployment insurance (UI) database through DETR to survey currently unemployed individuals, noting it's a cost-effective option since the system

and data already exist. For those no longer seeking work, he acknowledged this would be more difficult and costly, but possible through digital surveys with incentive stipends. He also raised concerns about gathering data from in-person job fairs, questioning whether there's staffing capacity to collect feedback. As a solution, he proposed using QR codes linked to brief surveys to reduce resource needs and still capture useful information.

Tiffany Vazquez shared that during her time supervising the EmployNV Business Hub team in the south, larger job fairs included employer surveys after the events. All attendee check-ins were tracked as well using CTS log or Radancy.

Brett Miller asked, "Is there a way to use technology to scrape our websites to catalog content that each of the programs finds important?"

Vice Chair Estipona responded that AI-powered web scraping could help gather useful data and offered to consult AI experts on how to implement it. He noted that his agency is exploring this approach to identify service overlaps among Northern Nevada nonprofits, aiming to reduce waste and improve resource efficiency.

Natalie Brown asked, "Do we have benchmarking data to go off of for action item number 2?"

Vice Chair Estipona noted that while some organizations, particularly state-sanctioned ones, likely have useful job fair data that could be shared with the group, it's unclear if others—like local chambers—collect similar information. There may be retrievable data if the group finds it valuable, aligning with ongoing discussions around measurement and evaluation.

Brett Miller asked, "If we are framing #1 around digital footprint, why don't we track the effectiveness and the activity around our digital outreach?"

Vice Chair Estipona shared that if all partners are transparent about their digital outreach efforts—like DETR, which tracks reach, impressions, and audience data by region—then it's possible to create a shared, statewide outreach dashboard. Achieving this would require collaboration and data sharing across all involved entities.

Brett Miller suggested that DETR's new EmployNV front end shell could offer useful data on user behavior, making it a simple first step toward better measurement.

Vice Chair Estipona discussed building a custom dashboard on the calendar—potentially through DETR and Google Studio—to track calendar traffic and user flow in real time. It was noted that only about 25% of the unemployed population is captured through UI data, leaving a significant gap in understanding the broader unemployed and disengaged population. Reaching that 75% would require new funding, possibly from the Governor's Reserve, but traction and demonstrated success would likely be necessary to justify such a request. A one-time grant could help fund a statewide outreach or survey campaign to gather this missing data.

Chair Olsen noted that data on employers using the system is available, suggesting that a marketing campaign—supported by requested funds—could focus on increasing employer engagement based on this existing data.

Vice Chair Estipona noted that EmployNV likely has relevant data, but specifics need to be confirmed with John.

Brett Miller noted that the current data on business engagement is limited, with a penetration rate of less than one percent, indicating a very narrow sample. Capacity constraints were noted, and it was pointed out that business engagement occurs beyond the Wagner-Peyser data set, meaning not all interactions are

captured in the available data.

Chair Olsen added that Adult education currently runs four workplace literacy projects directly serving employers, with employers initiating contact rather than through marketing efforts.

Vice Chair Estipona mentioned his hope is to improve communication within the unit, as some efforts, like those by adult education, may not be fully known to DETR. Progress will be gradual, building one step at a time. While not all answers are immediate, the group should keep addressing issues in manageable stages, focusing on the lowest-hanging fruit first and advancing steadily.

Chair Olsen asked, “Is anyone in favor of trying to work toward some type of coordinated approach to foster legislative support?”

Vice Chair Estipona focused on using "education" rather than "advocacy" or "legislative support," given the workforce system's complexity and the challenge for new lawmakers to understand it. Historically, competition within sectors has hindered collective progress. A recent legislative day was seen as a positive start. The idea of appointing a dedicated “point guard” to lead workforce system advocacy was proposed, though questions remain about who that should be—someone from the current team or a private-sector partner. This is viewed as a long-term goal (1–2 years), with a need to focus on shorter-term priorities first.

David Schmidt noted that advocating directly with the legislature can be sensitive for executive branch members due to separation of powers. They emphasized the importance of distinguishing between setting policy—which is the role of elected officials—and providing accessible, nonpartisan information about the workforce system. Their office worked to supply legislators with local data on unemployment and services without pushing for funding or policy changes. They suggested that advocacy at a high level might be best led by the Workforce Development Board or its chair as a centralized, neutral voice, especially given competing priorities and funding challenges. The key is making clear, accessible information available to elected officials.

Brett Miller commented, “I think we need to concentrate on what is our story to tell. If we can articulate that value, finding advocates will not be difficult. Very similar to this, WC has a tool that allows you to drill down to title I investment by political jurisdiction.”

Chair Olsen emphasized the need to focus on educating and informing rather than advocating, citing communication restrictions at the agency level. They suggested that legislative outreach would be better led by someone within the workforce system but independent of any specific agency.

Chair Soderberg emphasized that since many participants work for the governor and the board operates under the governor’s authority, legislative advocacy must be approached cautiously to avoid conflicting with the governor’s position. They highlighted that OWINN was established to handle legislative discussions and suggested that such efforts should go through OWINN rather than this committee or the full board. While supporting education and information sharing, he urged careful navigation to avoid overstepping boundaries.

Chair Olsen emphasized the importance of educating and informing legislators, suggesting OWINN or a private sector representative as the best suited for this role due to the workforce system’s complexity. It was proposed to focus on revamping the first goal with its strategies and action steps, then review and refine it in the next meeting before moving on to the second goal.

7. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – Discussion of Goal 1 – Population, review the strategies listed

- Awareness of public workforce system to underserved communities
- Streamline workforce and supportive services application and develop asset map for job seekers
- Champion public and nonprofit workforce staff and remove duplication of services

8. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ONLY – Review of feedback on proposed revisions to goal 2 – Engagement, in the Strategic Plan

Item 8 was deferred to the next meeting without discussion.

9. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – Discussion of Goal 2 – Engagement, review the strategies listed

Item 9 was deferred to the next meeting without discussion.

10. SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

Tiffany Vazquez read an emailed statement from Andrea Gregg, High Sierra AHEC – She was unable to attend the meeting but is very interested in the strategies related to population in the Strategic Plan.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:41pm.