

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

**FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, April 16, 2026 - 2:00 p.m.**

**Location:**

Nevada State Building  
Governor's Conference Room - 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
1 State of Nevada Way  
Las Vegas, NV 89119

**Video Conference location:**

DETR SAO Auditorium  
500 E. Third St.  
Carson City, NV 89713

**1. Call to Order - Opening Remarks and Pledge of Allegiance**

The full board meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 16, 2026. The meeting was held at the Governor's Conference Room in the Nevada State Building and video conferenced at the DETR SAO Auditorium in Carson City.

**2. Roll Call**

**Tiffany Vazquez, Board Liaison, OWINN** called roll and confirmed quorum.

**Members Present**

Don Soderberg, Chair  
Edward Estipona, Vice Chair  
Aubree Barnum  
Robert Benner  
Natalie Brown  
Irene Bustamante-Adams  
Louis DeSalvio  
George Gault  
Toni Giddens  
Haith Johnson  
Paul Kaplan  
Ken Lawson  
Tony Machabee  
Andrew MacKay  
Jerrie Merritt  
Suzanne Oetjen  
John Parel  
Janel Thomas  
Humberto Trueba  
Michael Yoder

**Absent**

Susan Brager  
Tracy Brown-May, Assemblymember  
Scott Black, Councilman  
Drazen Elez  
Ken Goodrich  
Dina Neal, Senator  
Sarah Johns  
Richard Neal  
Nancy Olsen  
Dennis Perea, Councilman  
Marchele Sneed  
Jesse Wadhams

**Others Present**

Kara Abe  
Elisa Cafferata  
Maricruz Hammack  
Noelle Hardt  
Ryan Hegan  
Kimberly Jadidi  
Sherri Mantanona  
Elaine Rodriguez  
Tamika Shauntee Rosales  
Tiffany Vazquez

**3. First Public Comment**

**Chair Soderberg** stated, “Members of the public are invited to provide comment at this time. No action may be taken upon a matter raised under this public comment period unless the matter has been specifically included on the agenda as an action item. We will impose a three-minute time limit on comments. Please clearly state your name and spell your full name for the record.”

**Elisa Cafferata, Executive Director**, Children’s Advocacy Alliance, mentioned her participation in the Child Care Symposium held in March. She is looking for support from the Board in making the economic case for investing in child care for Nevada.

**4. Approval of February 19, 2026, minutes - (For possible action)**

**Chair Soderberg** called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes. It was moved by **Jerrie Merritt** and seconded by **Natalie Brown**. The motion carried.

**5. Presentation by Boys & Girls Club Nevada Alliance about the Up Next Program - (Discussion/Informational only)**

**Noelle Hardt, Vice President of Government Affairs, Boys & Girls Club** and **Tamika Shauntee Rosales, Deputy Director of Government Affairs, Boys & Girls Club** presented on the “Up Next Nevada” Initiative, a collaboration between Nevada Alliance of Boys and

Girls Club, DETR, and NevadaWorks. This program aims to strengthen the youth development workforce.

**Chair Soderberg** asked Noelle, before opening the floor for questions, since most of the board members are private sector employers, how would they go about getting involved in this program if they'd choose?

**Noelle Hardt** agreed to share with Tiffany Vazaquez, to distribute to the board, their handout card which included a QR code and contact information. In addition, offering to connect the board members to the appropriate program lead in their community.

**Chair Soderberg** then took questions from the board.

**Irene Bustamante Adams** wanted to know, while this is a statewide initiative, how many of the 160 students mentioned were from the Southern Nevada region and who would be the point of contact for Southern Nevada? She wanted to clarify if there was an intent for the larger population to come from Southern Nevada since there are more learning centers in the North.

**Noelle Hardt** answered that there are currently 35 students in Southern Nevada and soon there will be as many as 70 with the new initiative being rolled out. Explaining that a majority of their students are spread out in the rural areas because their largest operational footprint sits in the North at this time. With the Boys and Girls Clubs launching the initiative in Clark County, they will begin with one operational site and three additional centers scheduled to open soon. In addition, there are 13 clubhouse locations serving youth within Clark County and 97 sites statewide.

Ms. Hardt recommended that Ms. Bustamante Adams connect with Tamika Shauntee Rosales as a point of contact for now.

**George Gault** commented that there is a steam center in Mesquite serving approximately 60 to 80 homeschool students on Tuesdays and Thursdays but are facing challenges in providing these students with access to resources typically available through the school district. Efforts to secure support through the Office of Science, Innovation and Technology have been unsuccessful due to the center not qualifying as a formal school, limiting eligibility for certain grants. He is interested in collaborating with the Boys and Girls Clubs, due to past positive experiences, and would like to connect (through Tiffany Vazquez) to explore potential partnership opportunities.

**Chair Soderberg** called for additional questions.

**Humberto Trueba** requested creating a visual slide that maps all Boys and Girls Club locations alongside population data in those areas. Although he is aware of the 13 clubs located in Las Vegas, he is uncertain about whether the current coverage is effectively serving the community and would like to use this opportunity to create awareness.

**Noelle Hardt** directed Mr. Trueba to the Boys and Girls club website where they have a map posted. She also offered to share the information with Ms. Vazquez for the board.

**Chair Soderberg** thanked Noelle Hardt and Tamika Shauntee Rosales for their presentation. Before moving on the Chair suggested combining agenda items 6 and 7 given that they cover the same topic from different presenters. He requested the board members hold their questions or comments until after the second presentation.

**6. Presentation by Workforce Connections on what is happening with Industry Sector Partnerships in Southern Nevada - (Discussion/Informational only)**

**Sherri Mantanona, Strategic Initiatives Manager, Workforce Connections** highlighted a shift from the NextGen model to a continuous task force approach.

**7. Presentation by NevadaWorks on what is happening with Industry Sector Partnerships in Northern Nevada - (Discussion/Informational only)**

**Ryan Hogan, Industry Engagement Specialist, Nevadaworks** discussed a framework designed to reduce “meeting fatigue” for employers holding bimonthly virtual meetings for tactical, quick-response hiring needs. The meetings are system-facing where education and training providers coordinate actionable items based on industry feedback. They are expanding target sectors to include the lithium battery life cycle and construction. Ryan highlighted the effort to bring small and medium-sized businesses into the workforce system.

**Chair Soderberg** opened the discussion for questions from the board.

**John Parel** began with a couple of questions, starting with his first question for Sherri; wondering if they are convening the same meetings with the stakeholders, the collaborators, and partners. He then asked how we are engaging the EmployNV hubs and coordinating with other titles within the job centers to meet the needs, particularly when filling specific positions.

**Sherri Mantanona** responded that this has always been a strategy that she has implemented. As Ryan noted, they participate during the next-generation model phase, attend convenings, and stay engaged through ongoing touchpoints and strategic planning meetings. Ensuring responsibility and tasks are effectively distributed.

**Ryan Hogan** added that they help employers navigate what can be a confusing workforce system by positioning the EmployNV Hub as a central, accessible “storefront” for services. Through clear guidance, introductions, and ongoing support, they ensure employers and job seekers can effectively access resources, with business services teams playing a key role in facilitating that engagement.

**George Gault** connected the idea of early engagement from the presentation to his prior conversation with the CCSD’s Director, where he was told launching a CTE program may take about a year and is difficult to implement. Despite the challenges he remains interested in expanding CTE opportunities in Mesquite, where such programs are limited. He quickly highlighted a recent report that the district may lose about 43,000 students, not knowing where these students will end up. The potential link between declining enrollment and unmet needs both point to a problem and opportunity for improvement.

**Ryan Hogan** talked about his participation with the DOE review committee for CTE programs. He described it as an honor to be able to review 25 detailed, high-quality proposals, was a significant and time intensive effort. Noting that the experience highlighted the creativity of students and faculty, and the competitiveness of funding, as many of the programs were deserving of support.

**Chair Soderberg** called out for any further questions. Being that there were none, he moved on to the next presentation.

**8. Board Training – WIOA and GWDB Overview - (Discussion/Informational only)**

**Maricruz Hammack, Training Supervisor, DETR** provided training on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), covering its five titles, giving a high-level overview of the State Board’s responsibilities, discussing the role of the local workforce development boards, and explaining how the American Job Centers operate.

**Chair Soderberg** requested, in the interest of time, members to hold off on questioning and proposed they address them directly with Ms. Hammack after the conclusion of the meeting.

**Michael Yoder** commented that TANF Title IV is also a mandatory partner under the Division of Social Services. He took the opportunity to state this as he has worked over the years to ensure that all partners are aware of and recognize our role and designation within the partnership.

**Jerrie Merritt** emphasized that she has Chaired the local Workforce Connection board for the past four years and believes the information shared with the committee today is very important. Not only is it valuable for the board members, but for the broader community as well. Too often, people think of American Job Centers without fully understanding their direct connection to employers and workforce development. Today’s presentation helped clarify that relationship and highlighted the critical role these centers play in supporting both businesses and job seekers.

**9. New Business from Full Board Members (Discussion/Informational only)**

There were none.

**10. Second Public comment**

There were none.

**11. Adjournment**

**Chair Soderberg** called for a motion to adjourn. It was moved by **Jerrie Merritt** and seconded by **Vice Chair Estipona**. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:43 p.m.