

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

July 22, 2020, 2:30pm-5:00pm

Virtual Meeting

Minutes Approved 10/08/20, by unanimous vote

Present:

Council Members: Governor Ned Lamont, Chair Garrett Moran, Vice-Chair Kellie Marie Vallieres, C. Bigelow, M. Ferguson, Senator T. Hwang, R. Kumar, R. Levy, J. Olian, D. O'Neill, P. Salovey, E. Smith, Representative T. Walker, M. Borgstrom, M. Ferguson, O. Chukwu, Representative T. Hwang,

Ex-officio Members: M. Cardona, C. Cooper, V. Dorantes, P. Denious, S. Gaul, T. Katsouleas, T. Larson, D. Lehman, M. Ojakian, M. Pirro-Simmons, K. Westby, J. Widness, J. Wihbey

Partner Committee Members: A. Johnson, A. Pritchard, W. Villano, M. Argosh, C. Fero, P. Hackett, J. Gerber, S. Shepard, S. Adamsen, S. Marimon, A. Angus, D. Allon,

[00:01:28] Introductory Remarks

Review of agenda and logistics for today's meeting. Announcement of Kelli-Vallieres as the new head of the Workforce Development Unit

[00:04:13] Kelli-Vallieres Introduction / Thank You Remarks

[00:06:18] Economic Overview - Garrett Moran

US vs. CT Job Growth from 2003 to today shows job losses and gains from both the 08/09 financial crisis and the COVID-19 Crisis. The US lost 8.5M jobs in 2009, and gained 22.5M jobs, almost all of which were wiped out during March and April of 2020. Connecticut lost 120K jobs in 08/09 and never gained them all back. Both CT and the US Economy are showing signs of job recovery in May and June, post COVID-19. Pre Recession to Pre COVID in CT, we saw a decline in manufacturing and finance, which has been a flagship area between finance and insurance and Connecticut. Since the COVID-19 crisis, Connecticut has seen an 11% decrease in employment, led by leisure and hospitality and retail.

[00:10:46] Budget

CT has an extraordinary budget situation for the fiscal year ending now and in the coming year, projecting about a \$3 billion budget gap. Connecticut is in a relatively stronger position with a two and a half billion dollar rainy day fund. The 1.4b received from the federal government

relates to one time unexpected COVID expenses, so it doesn't enter significantly into the budget math.

[00:12:55] CT Back to Work

CT Back to Work was one of the immediate responses to COVID, including SkillSoft / Metrix, 180 Skills and the Indeed Job Board. These programs target the unemployed populations looking to retrain and rehire the workforce.

[00:15:00] Additional COVID-19 Response Initiatives - Garrett Moran

Beyond the first three initiatives, there was a portion of the CARES Grant allocated for the workforce, that we are working to put to use.

- Workforce Training Innovation Fund – CARES grant
 - \$15 million in CARES Act funding being deployed in innovative workforce training programs
- Reimagining Workforce Grant – US DOE CARES Opportunity
 - Applying for additional CARES Act funding to create advance a statewide manufacturing sector partnership initiative including the funding of regional Manufacturing Learning Centers
- Student 5.0 – Supporting graduating HS Seniors in job readiness
 - Graduating high school seniors in distressed districts explore careers through online learning and receive college readiness support from peer mentors; led by Ready CT and funded by 4-CT
- Rapid Healthcare training and job placement program for displaced hospitality workers
 - Displaced hospitality workers receive new credentials and employment opportunities at large hospital systems. Partnership led by SVP, Bank of America, Career Resources and Housatonic and Norwalk Community Colleges

[00:18:05] GWC Committee Progress

The GWC Committees have been making progress across several key initiatives. We will be releasing the next version of our strategy document in October, and in the meantime, we will be offering opportunities for the committees to cross pollinate information on organized zoom calls.

- Regional Sector Partnerships - stakeholder groups are convening
 - We will be working to define a strategy among educators, workforce boards, businesses and other affinity groups
- Work-Based Learning - new committee has hit the deck running, building on CT's best examples
- Data & Performance -- enhancing P20 WIN
- Supportive Services -- developing benefits cliffs tools, examining childcare reform

[00:23:56] Remarks from Governor Lamont

Welcomes Kelli to her new role. Highlights the changes in the world since our last meeting, and identifies this time as a unique opportunity to be training youth for unmet jobs and skills. COVID will continue to impact our state but right now, we have the lowest infection rate in the country and high testing protocols. Governor is pushing to reopen schools next month while it is safe, because we don't know how long it will remain this safe and it's important to educate students whenever and however we can.

[00:28:20] GWC Core Priorities

We have divided the strategy into four key priorities, and summarize the initiatives they highlight on the following four slides.

[00:30:00] Career Building - Help students explore and enter educational programs that are aligned with in-demand career pathways

- Enhancing career readiness
 - ◆ Students supported by comprehensive academic and career advising
- Expanding educational opportunities
 - ◆ Increase dual enrollment programs to improve college affordability
 - ◆ Redesign adult education
- Align curriculum with careers
 - ◆ Align high school and post secondary educational programs with in-demand career pathways
 - ◆ Expand computer science education and digital literacy
 - ◆ Increase sector-focused education and training for high-demand jobs

[00:30:32] Workforce Participation; Equity and Access: Reduce the barriers that have limited access to training, sustainable work, and high quality career opportunities

- Breaking down barriers to work
 - ◆ Expand capacity of childcare system to support the sustainability of work
 - ◆ Reduce transportation barriers that undermine sustained workforce participation
 - ◆ Expand access to behavioral health services that allow individuals to lead healthy productive careers
- Activating the workforce
 - ◆ Reduce the adverse effects of benefit cliffs

[00:30:41] Business Leadership: Build a dynamic workforce by creating a system of regional sector partnerships that integrates the needs of businesses with educational and supportive systems

- Building pathways to employment
 - ◆ Expand capacity of childcare system to support the sustainability of work
 - ◆ Reduce transportation barriers that undermine sustained workforce participation
 - ◆ Expand access to behavioral health services that allow individuals to lead healthy productive careers

→ Activating the workforce

- ◆ Reduce the adverse effects of benefit cliff

[00:31:15] Future Proofing and Innovation: Create an innovative data and technological infrastructure that enhance the delivery and outcomes of workforce services

→ Enhancing delivery of workforce services

- ◆ Create a certificate and degree inventory system
- ◆ Create data and performance management infrastructure to guide workforce planning
- ◆ Enhance digital front end for job seekers and employers
- ◆ Improve longitudinal data system to analyze educational and workforce outcomes

→ Build meaningful careers

- ◆ Build and implement a career pathways system that allows students and workers to explore different career paths

→ Aligning regional and statewide partners

- ◆ Improve the alignment of regional workforce board activities with state workforce strategies

Moving the Needle Presentations

Three pairs of speakers addressing critically strategic areas and how we are moving the needle on these issues.

[00:34:31] Building Career Pathways - Kelli Vallieres and Jim Lombella

Kelli and Jim have worked together on statewide manufacturing initiatives for many years as industry / academic institution partners. They have overcome three main challenges when working together

1. How do we align curriculum and industry needs
 - It is often hard to open the right lines of communication to bridge these gaps and fix these issues between companies and colleges. Must find a common language to talk about manufacturing needs in.
 - College of Technology (CIT) must be leveraged in this effort, it is well funded and recognized nationally and can be a good source of leadership.
2. Regional Sector Partnerships
 - Sharing best practices across the regions will accelerate scaling of key initiatives.
 - Stackable credentials and clear pathways are key to the success of manufacturing in Connecticut and the industry needs to continue to promote this model.
3. How do we educate our potential future workforce?
 - This includes young people, parents, guidance counselors, and our education system on opportunities that are available in the manufacturing space.
 - Perception of manufacturing is a challenge at all levels of the state, and despite marketing campaigns, perception isn't changing fast enough. We need to keep

educating K12 educators and guidance counselors on these good paying jobs with growth opportunities.

[00:49:44] Career Advising and Mentorship - Greg Desantis and Duncan Harris

Greg DeSantis - Associate Vice President of Student Success and Academic initiatives for the Connecticut State College university system.

Guided Pathways is a broad set of student success reforms that colleges around the country have implemented and they help students by clarifying the paths to their goals, helping students choose and enter a pathway, keeping them on that path, and ensuring that students are learning what they need to succeed in their career. In Connecticut, we're setting out to build a new college, through consolidation of existing institutions (CSCU) and basing how we build it on those same Guided Pathways principles. This will open in 2023, and one of the Guided Pathways policies is the Holistic Advising Policy. This will move us from the walk in advising model where students may or may not choose to wait in line and meet with someone in the advising office. To a model where every student is assigned a guided pathways advisor as they start at the college, and that's their person throughout their education.

[00:55:27] Duncan Harris, CEO of Capitol Community College

Spoke about the importance of advising and coaching and nuanced supports for our modern minoritized students. Personal mentorship and support is a key driver for the success of many students, and needs to be part of the academic experience for students who don't have that support in their personal lives. This is most common in minority students, so at Capital Community College we are launching the Brother-2-Brother program which will pair black and Latino males with mentors, that strong support person interested in sharing the success formula simply with them to talk about what they've done in their careers, to be successful to have the ability to provide for themselves and their families.

[01:02:19] Work Based Learning Partnerships - Lynn Baronas and George Anderson

Lynn Barone is from the University of Hartford, who oversees their career connections activity

- Role & Mission
 - Senior Director of Strategic Corporate Engagement, central contact for businesses and corporations who want to build relationships with the school. Making sure the school is working efficiently with our partners, that we are listening to what our corporate partners want, and that we are returning value to them. This requires consistent communication and trust.
- University Engagement and Partnerships
 - Some methods of engagement include mentorship, advising, work based learning opportunities, practicum internships, skills applications, class based consulting projects, curriculum and program development

- These engagements allow for career exploration and skills development, but also time management, communication, presentation skills and teamwork.
- Partners include Stanley Black and Decker, Infosys, Cigna
- Return on Investment
 - Student and employer introductions and connections, including talent pipeline
 - Opportunity for partners to give back, which they appreciate
 - 64% of students who graduated in 18/19 stayed in Connecticut, versus 34% being from Connecticut, which is significant

[01:09:25] *George Anderson, Chief Learning Officer at Synchrony*

Synchrony is a financial technology company based in Stanford who partnered with UConn Technology Center, and is going to speak to the value of this work.

1. Need for a sense of urgency
 - a. Synchrony sees a need for new skills in the marketplace (cybersecurity, data analytics etc), and wants to hire more people and retrain current employees into these more stable jobs. This is an urgent need, and there are three vendors currently available, but we would rather partner with CT resources if they are available.
2. Need for true partnership
 - a. How do institutionalize these partnerships, and ensure that they aren't dependent upon a few champions, but built into the company and the academic institution. There is a need for more effective communication, listening, and collaborating to solve these problems. There are no simple solutions, and we need to shift from an ask and tell model to a jointly solve the problem model.

[01:14:11] Break and Breakout Rooms

Participants entered four different breakout rooms on two topics: Overlooked Groups (led by Oni Chukwu and Cindi Bigelow) and The Post COVID Social Contract (led by Marna Borgstrom and Ravi Kumar). Breakout rooms were not recorded.

[01:18:12] Breakout Room Debriefs

[01:44:36] Q&A