

## Eastern Area Workforce Development Board

CEO Meeting Minutes  
Via ZOOM Video Conference  
August 12, 2025

Meeting called to Order at 2:01 pm by Lead CEO Clay Kiesling

### **ROLL CALL**

Roll call was taken. Below is the record of attendance based on that:

**CEO's present:** C. Kiesling, F. Madrid, T. Dixon, D. Dowell, M. Burns, A. Barela

**CEO's absent:** *M. Gallagher, Harding County, Chaves County, Guadalupe County, DeBaca County*

**AE/FA Staff present:** B. Elias, T. Roth, T. Suarez, M. Sosa, C. Carrasco, V. Davis

**Board Members present:** D. Davis, J. Martinez, L. Jackson, R. Martinez, S. Pawlyshyn, M. Espiritu

**Guests present:** D. Batista

*It was noted that a quorum present, with A. Barela designated by V. Marquardt.*

### **WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS**

T. Suarez introduced the guests attending via zoom.

### **PY25/FY26 BUDGET**

T. Roth provided an overview of the PY25/FY26 budget, noting that the total available funding for the year is approximately \$5.7 million, which includes carry-in funds. She explained that there was a reduction in the Title I award for the current year, which will result in tighter operations overall. However, programmatic services will be maintained at the same level as the previous year. T. Roth reported that the board approved a \$600,000 transfer from Dislocated Worker funds to Adult funds to support direct participant services. Of the total budget, approximately \$4.8 million has been allocated, leaving about \$868,000 unbudgeted, primarily within the Adult program line item. She also noted that contracts totaling between \$2.3 and \$2.4 million have been awarded to ENMU-Ruidoso for one-stop and service provider activities. Projected direct participant expenditures include approximately \$1.125 million for Adult participants and about \$150,000 for Dislocated Worker participants, with an additional \$300,000 anticipated from the National Dislocated Worker Disaster Recovery Grant. This brings total dislocated worker expenditure to roughly \$450,000. T. Roth mentioned that while the anticipated funding reduction ended up being slightly higher than expected, internal adjustments and coordination with the service

provider helped to offset the reduction. B. Elias added that the organization experienced a larger percentage reduction than other workforce boards, due to the funding formula for dislocated workers, which is driven by local unemployment figures. Because local unemployment numbers were lower, the resulting allocation was impacted accordingly. While no significant challenges are expected in the current year, T. Roth noted that carry-in funds for the following year will be limited.

On a motion by T. Dixon and seconded by F. Madrid, a motion was made to approve the PY25/FY26 Budget. A roll call vote was conducted, and the PY25/FY26 Budget was unanimously approved.

### **FISCAL AGENT AGREEMENT**

B. Elias provided an update on the Fiscal Agent Agreement, noting that the document presented is identical to the version approved last year, with the exception of a minor clerical revision. She explained that when the structure transitioned from a separate entity, some language regarding hiring and firing had not been updated to reflect the current arrangement. That section has since been corrected to align with the existing organizational structure. No other substantive changes were made. The agreement continues to outline the responsibilities and requirements of the fiscal agent.

On a motion by T. Dixon and seconded by F. Madrid, a motion was made to approve the Fiscal Agent Agreement. A roll call vote was conducted, and the Fiscal Agent Agreement was unanimously approved.

### **BOARD TERM RENEWALS**

B. Elias provided an overview of the board term renewal process, noting that members nominated and approved by the CEOs serve two-year terms. These terms are staggered to ensure continuity, with half of the board expiring in one year and the remaining half the following year. She explained that in order to maintain the current board membership, the CEOs must approve the extension of those seats whose terms are ending. She also noted that there is one seat that will require a replacement but our private sector percentage is still compliant.

On a motion by T. Dixon and seconded by D. Dowell, a motion was made to approve the Board Term renewals. A roll call vote was conducted, and the Board Term Renewals were unanimously approved.

### **OPEN MEETINGS ACT RESOLUTION**

B. Elias presented the annual Open Meetings Act (OMA) resolution, noting that board approval is required each year. She explained that during the pandemic, the State Attorney General had allowed certain provisions for virtual meetings, but those provisions have since been rescinded, reverting to pre-COVID standards. As a result, the board must now formally define what constitutes a situation that makes in-person attendance difficult or impossible to allow for virtual participation. The resolution includes updated language to reflect these requirements, outlining circumstances such as illness or injury, family or health-related issues, overlapping meeting commitments, personal or work-related

travel during the meeting time, and loss of work productivity due to travel time exceeding the anticipated length of the meeting.

On a motion by T. Dixon and seconded by F. Madrid, a motion was made to approve the Open Meetings Act Resolution. A roll call vote was conducted, and the Open Meetings Act Resolutions were unanimously approved.

## **UPDATES**

B. Elias provided an update relevant to the majority of the region regarding the development of a P-20 education and workforce development model. This initiative is a collaborative effort involving K-12, early childhood education, higher education institutions, workforce development, apprenticeship programs, and economic development partners. She reported that the group recently secured an initial \$400,000 in funding to support the model's establishment. Notably, 19 school districts have already committed to implementing the model, with 11 more expected to join in the coming months. The majority of the districts are in the Eastern Region. B. Elias highlighted that similar models have been successfully launched in states such as Texas, Alaska, Ohio, and Illinois, serving as a pathway from early childhood through post-secondary education into employment sectors facing workforce shortages. The model also includes pathways for individuals who have dropped out of traditional education or have gaps in training, providing opportunities for re-engagement and high school equivalency attainment. She emphasized the importance of engaging the disengaged workforce to address the current labor shortage in the state. Furthermore, B. Elias noted the benefits for rural districts, which can collaborate to offer training opportunities that might otherwise be unavailable due to limited resources. She expressed enthusiasm for the model's potential and mentioned its expected introduction to the upcoming legislative session. B. Elias also shared that the superintendent in Corona has been actively promoting the initiative statewide and has garnered significant legislative support. Secretary Nair from the Department of Workforce Solutions is serving as a key advocate for the model within the governor's cabinet. Initial funding has enabled the pursuit of additional foundation support, including pre-apprenticeship funding for participating students.

B. Elias requested nominations for two additional private sector members to increase private sector representation. Partner seats are currently filled but private sector recruitment remains a challenge, especially in rural areas.

## **Next Meeting**

To Be Determined.

## **Motion to Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 2:26 pm.