



**Wyoming Workforce Development Council
Quarterly Meeting - On-Site and Zoom
Casper, Wyoming
November 8-9, 2023**

November 8, 2023

Council Members Present

Director Robin Cooley
Ron Wild
Tiffany Marshall
Mayor Matt Hall
Danny Burau
Dr. Michelle Aldrich for
Superintendent Degenfelder
Sara DiRienzo for Governor
Gordon

Representative Ryan Berger
Eric Trowbridge, Vice Chair
Bria Hammock
Tammy Johnson
Charles Wilson
Ron Gullberg for Josh Dorell

Jim Engel
Larry Fodor
Fabian Lobera, Chair
Katie Hogarty
Danny Burau
Brian Hickman for Nicky
Harper

Council Members Absent

Senator Fred Baldwin
Nathan Williams
Commissioner Robert Short
Tina Conley

Tony Cross
Phillip Cornella
Dr. Sandy Caldwell
Mark Madsen

Dick Smith
Brenda Morgan
Travis Lawrence
Michael Kercher

DWS Staff Present

Jennifer Wilch
Holly Simoni
Jeanette Pickenpaugh
Shannon Gage
Trevor Mansfield
Kaley Holyfield
Heather Tupper

Tyler Stockton
Christina West
Jason Wolfe
Amy Petterson
Elizabeth Gagen
Denise Rodriguez
Brandi Harlow

Ivy Castleberry
Brittany Redenbaugh
Kristy Tyrney
Joe Underwood
Kris Funk
Lena Potter
Lori Cielinski

Others Present

Ashley Harpstreith

Rachel Chadderdon

Day 1: November 8, 2023

I. Call to Order & Welcome Presenter: Chair Fabian Lobera

Chairman Fabian Lobera called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

A. WWDC Roll Call Presenter: Jennifer Wilch

Jennifer Wilch took roll call and noted we have a quorum.

B. Approval of Agenda Presenter: Fabian Lobera

Jim Engel moved to approve the agenda as written; Tammy Johnson seconded. The motion carried.

C. Approval of September Minutes Presenter: Fabian Lobera

Danny Burau moved to approve May Minutes; Jim Engel seconded. The motion carried.

II. Message from the Chairman Presenter: Chair Fabian Lobera

Fabian Lobera welcomed Sarah DiRienzo and Tiffany Marshall. Fabian provided an update to the council to officially close the Innovations Foundation, privately funded by Jim Engel and other contributors. The decision to close the foundation was made due to the mission becoming obsolete, and it was decided that the remaining funds would be utilized to purchase some swag for Workforce Services at community events.

Motion to dissolve the Innovations Foundation

Jim Engel moved to approve; Larry Fodor seconded. The motion carried.

III. Department of Workforce Services Update Presenter: Director Robin Sessions Cooley

Director Robin Cooley provided strategic planning updates helping to support a sustainable, high-quality workforce for the 21st century. Director Cooley also provided budget updates that included a recent meeting with the Governor. The agency has requested general fund money from the legislature to help reallocate federal funds back into services and a clawback of cuts previously made. Additionally, 15 new positions have been requested in response to updated federal guidelines requiring additional work that will require additional staff. For employment and training, the agency asked for another clawback of the general fund monies due to declining or flat federal funds, simultaneously occurring with an increase in service costs, tuition costs, supply costs, inflation, etc. Additional general funds are being requested to support the Workforce Development Training Fund while working in collaboration with the legislative joint appropriations committee to potentially find other funding sources. The Workforce Development Training Fund has been a very successful program. The fund supports internships, apprenticeships, business development, and bringing business into Wyoming. Director Cooley highlighted her recent workforce trip to Taiwan, where she learned many innovative ways to

support workforce development that can serve as inspiration for growth in several areas. While in Taiwan Director Cooley also met with the Wyoming Business Council's representative and several businesses and programs. Lastly, Director Cooley highlighted the "Be Pro Be Proud" program as a model for us to learn from, a program that would require a lot of individuals, funding, and work to bring this program to Wyoming. "Be Pro Be Proud" is a mobile workshop simulator. The program originated from a pilot program in three schools in Arkansas and was highly successful.

IV. Workforce Programs Update Presenter: Holly McKamey Simoni

Holly provided an update on collaboration with internal and external stakeholders. She highlighted the new healthcare grant funded by ARPA that will support the Wyoming Health Train Program. The agency is also supporting a new grant that funds EMS and Paramedic training. The Business Training and Support Unit is currently working on a new grant management system. The agency is partnering with the Department of Education on a Wyoming Innovation Partnership (WIP) initiative to create a digital wallet where you can store all of your credentials and certifications, with an expansion in the future to add workforce skills. The digital wallet helps expedite the hiring process and should be available in approximately a year from now upon completion of the RFP process developing software and creating a project manager. The University of Wyoming has also recommended looking at a blockchain model. Holly provided details regarding the ARPA Pre-Apprenticeship grant that will provide a completion award of \$1,500 per student and up to \$1,000 per student for supportive services in alignment with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Vocational rehab was recently awarded a 10 million dollar grant to support the Disability Innovation Fund, which stretches out over 5 years to help increase access to mental health supports, in addition to career and life skills. Reemployment Services and Eligibility (RESEA) is gaining traction and was recently awarded an additional \$88,000 for a partnership between unemployment insurance and our workforce centers. Holly also provided updates regarding the three unemployment insurance grants to help support the system being more user-friendly, provide virtual support, and continue measures to avoid fraud and protect the integrity of the system.

V. Title I Program Team and One-Stop Operations Update Presenter: Christina West, Trevor Mansfield

Christina West provided updates on the strategic plan with goals and objectives and on leadership training. She introduced the one-stop center's operations managers and highlighted the work they have done in each of their communities. Trevor Mansfield provided details about the Rapid Response Program that is ready to serve whether there has been one or over a hundred workers impacted by a layoff. This program provides a variety of resources to support each of the workers in becoming reemployed as quickly as possible. The increase in the number of affected businesses is up to 267%. Trevor also highlighted the recent purchase of a Starlink Satellite Dish to help support Zoom connectivity for meetings where the space does not have a great internet connection.



VI. Casper Team Workforce Center Update Presenters: Shannon Gage, Amy Petterson
Shannon provided updates on their center’s strategic planning and relationship building with employers to facilitate additional on-the-job training opportunities. Not all individuals will desire or be eligible for college or training programs.

BREAK: Resume at 3:05 PM

VII. Wyoming Tax Payers Association Presenter: Ashley Harpstreet
Ashley Harpstreet provided an overview of the Wyoming Tax Payer’s Association. The Association was founded in 1937 and advocates for sound tax policy, with a 501(c)4 and a 501(c)3 research arm.

VIII. Adjourn
The meeting adjourned for recess at 3:39 pm and will resume on November 9, at 8:30 am.

Day 2 November 9, 2023

Council Members Present

Director Robin Cooley	Fabian Lobera, Chair	Jim Engel
Danny Burau	Mayor Matt Hall	Katie Hogarty
Ron Wild	Eric Trowbridge, Vice Chair	Larry Fodor
Tina Conley	Mark Madsen	Bria Hammock
Brenda Morgan	Tiffany Marshall	Charles Wilson
Tammy Johnson	Sara DiRienzo for Governor	Phillip Cornella
Dr. Michelle Aldrich for	Gordon	Ron Gullberg for Josh Dorell
Superintendent Degenfelder	Brian Hickman for Nicky	Dr. Ben Moritz for Dr. Sandy
Kristie Arneson-Gordy for	Harper	Caldwell
Korin Schmidt		

Council Members Absent

Senator Fred Baldwin	Representative Ryan Berger	Tony Cross
Dick Smith	Nathan Williams	Travis Lawrence
Commissioner Robert Short		

DWS Staff Present

Jennifer Wilch	Tyler Stockton	Ivy Castleberry
Jeanette Pickenpaugh	Trevor Mansfield	Elizabeth Gagen
Brittany Redenbaugh	Kristy Tyrney	Denise Rodriguez
Lena Potter	Lori Cielinski	



Others Present

Justin Farly

Day 2: November 9, 2023

I. Call to Order & Welcome Presenter: Chair Fabian Lobera

Chairman Fabian Lobera called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

A. WWDC Roll Call Presenter: Jennifer Wilch

Jennifer Wilch took roll call and noted we have a quorum.

II. Advance Casper Presenter: Justin Farly

Justin Farly presented details about new business development and industries locating themselves within Casper. Advance Casper facilitates the joint power board and membership of employers within Natrona County. Advance Casper is currently taking steps to establish a foreign trade zone in collaboration with the Casper International Airport and assuming the risk of liability. A foreign trade zone allows companies to import products and helps to eliminate tariffs. Products do not become taxed until they leave a foreign trade zone. A foreign trade zone has great potential to benefit industries in Wyoming, including manufacturing. The Fly Casper Alliance has also been established to help support this endeavor and continue to keep the community connected to the Casper International Airport.

III. Wyoming Relay Presenter: Lori Cielinski

Lori Cielinski presented information about outreach, training, and resources that Wyoming Relay provides to support deaf services across Wyoming. Wyoming Relay works in collaboration with Vocational Rehabilitation. Education and outreach is also provided to the public.

IV. Business Training and Support Unit Update

Presenters: Shaye Moon, Sharon Geissler, Ivie Moore

Shaye Moon provided updates on the Workforce Development Training Programs and Apprenticeship programs. Sharon Geissler provided information about the Workforce Development Training Fund, the Wyoming Health Train Grant, and the WDTF apprenticeship grant. Ivie Moore provided updates on technical assistance and the expansion of apprenticeship programs in Wyoming. Additionally, Ivie provided information on pre-apprenticeship programs being offered to the youth population.

BREAK: Resume at 10:37 AM

V. New MIS Demo Presenter: Trevor Mansfield

Trevor provided updates on the new website that will include new resources, features, and be more user-friendly. The website is on track to be released in December of 2023.

VI. Talent Transition Update Presenter: Tyler Stockton

Tyler provided updates on the talent transition marketing campaign designed to assist workers in transitioning from industries not as viable. He outlined the next steps, and design and production will start in January 2024.

VII. Spending Plan and Expenditures Presenter: Jennifer Cassidy

Jennifer Cassidy provided expenditures for July, August, and September of 2023. 96% of the funds from the 2021 grant year have been spent with \$17,097 remaining. As of the end of the month of September 2023, there was a total of \$968,813 remaining. The amount remaining for the 2022 grant year was \$475,304, and the amount remaining for the 2023 grant year was \$476,413. Jennifer presented the current project expenditures that include Invoices for micro-credentialing for the Department of Education. Strategic planning has processed one invoice and remains ongoing. Funds for the Southwest Wyoming Manufacturing Partnership have been allocated. \$250,000 of the MIS budget has been spent and \$250,000 remains. Invoices for Workforce Center chairs have been processed. The estimated total amount budgeted for projects is \$774,680 and \$452,068 of the project budget remains.

Approval of Spending Plan and Expenditures

Jim Engel motioned to approve the spending plan and expenditures, and Danny Burau seconded. All voted in favor of the spending plan and expenditures.

VIII. Next Gen Sector Partnership Grant Request Presenters: Jennifer Wilch

Jennifer Wilch provided updates on the Tri-County Healthcare Alliance, the Next Gen healthcare partnership involving 3 Wyoming counties. The grant request was voted on and recommended for approval by the Strategic Performance and Finance Committee because it was over 5 thousand dollars. Only a Next Gen Sector Partnership can apply for a support grant and this grant requires a 10 % in kind or cash match. The Goshen County Economic Development Association will be providing the 10 % match.

Approval of Tri-County Healthcare Alliance

Jim Engel motioned for approval and Mayor Hall seconded, all in favor of the Tri-County Healthcare Alliance. The motion carried.

IX. Contracts for 2024

A. Collaborative Economics

Brenda Morgan provided an update on John Melville and his team continuing to provide support for Next Gen Partnerships in Wyoming. There have been three new partnerships created, including a new healthcare partnership in Casper, and in Cody

through the Bighorn Basin Hospitality Partnership. John will continue to collaborate with the Sector Partnership and Career Pathways Committee. The Next Gen Sector Partnership Committee and the Strategic Performance and Finance Committee has recommended approval of the Collaborative Economics Contract.

Approval of Collaborative Economics Contract

ET motioned for approval and Jim Engel seconded, all in favor of the Collaborative Economics Contract. The motion carried.

B. Warehouse 21

Jennifer Wilch provided an update on the website contract with the included parameters and features for an additional year of support for \$3,000. The Strategic Performance and Finance Committee has recommended the continuation of Warehouse 21's contract.

X. Committee Updates

A. Communications & Community Relations

Committee Chairman Danny Burau provided an update about the boilerplate letter, obtaining measurable data of our engagement with the public through additional social media such as LinkedIn and developing a concise elevator pitch educating the public on the Wyoming Workforce Development Council. Ron Wild provided an update on the Southwest Manufacturing partnership.

B. Next Generation Sector Partnerships & Career Pathways

Brenda provided an update about the Collaborative Economics contract. Larry Fodor provided an update about the Wyoming Young Contractor's Coalition and the potential of a new construction sector partnership.

C. Strategic Performance & Finance

No updates from Strategic Performance & Finance

XII. Public Comment

No comments were brought forward for public comment.

Eric Trowbridge provided commentary on the importance of cyber security during large technical transactions. Director Cooley provided details on the JAC budget hearing information along with an invitation to attend on Dec 18 at 3pm. On October 5, 2023 Mark Madsen and Ron Wild attended a meeting about carbon capture and the new nuclear facility. Employment requirements were discussed. Director Cooley further elaborated on these numbers and the efforts to expand the Wyoming Relocate Program and website to help make these businesses successful. Continued discussion will take place at the upcoming budget hearing. Ron Wild will



obtain concrete data of the numbers required and submit additional data to the DWS.

XIII. Adjourn

Jim Engel moved to adjourn, seconded by Mayor Matt Hall. Chairman Fabian Lobera adjourned the meeting at 12:01 pm.