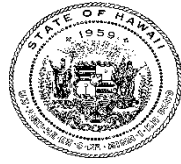


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Workforce Development Council

Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes Summary

Wednesday, June 04, 2025

1:30 – 3:00 pm

In-person and online via Zoom

I. Call to Order / II. Welcome to Summer Intern Angela Chock (00:00:03 – 00:04:30)

The Executive Committee meeting of the Workforce Development Council was called to order at 1:30 PM by Vice Chair Cary Miyashiro, who presided in the absence of Chair Ken Loui (excused due to family travel). The meeting was held in accordance with Hawai'i's Sunshine Law, with both Zoom and in-person access available at Room 317 of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

Roll call was conducted, and quorum was established with 6 of 9 representatives present:

Members Present:

- Cary Miyashiro (Vice Chair)
- Dion Dizon (Vice Chair, Special Projects)
- Carla Kurokawa (Vice Chair, Youth Services)
- Sean Knox (Vice Chair, Performance Management)
- Trang Malone (Chair, Military & Veterans Affairs)
- Lorna Woo (Vice Chair, Sector Partnerships)

Members Excused:

- Ken Loui

- Keith DeMello
- Tui Scanlan
- Donovan Dela Cruz
- Cheryl Cross
- Derek Kanehira

Following roll call, public guests introduced themselves, including representatives from McKinley Community School for Adults, the office of Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, and a DNP student attending for clinical practicum hours.

The committee also welcomed Angela Chock, the current Hele Imua Intern, who introduced herself and shared her appreciation for the opportunity to learn alongside the WDC staff.

III. Financial Reports (00:04:30 – 00:27:46)

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha presented the financial reports, referencing pages 9–20 of the meeting packet.

She reviewed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grant summary as of March 31, 2025, noting that the total Program Year 2023 (PY 2023) allocation was \$10.3 million, of which approximately \$6.3 million had been expended. County-level spending breakdowns were shared:

- Honolulu: 57%
- Hawai'i Island: 67%
- Maui: 52%
- Kaua'i: 33%
- State WIOA: 91%

It was explained that 15% of total funds are retained by the state for administration and program support, while 85% are distributed to counties based on population and economic data. Counties have two years to spend their allocations, after which unused funds revert to the state. The state then has one additional year to expend those funds before they are returned to the federal government.

PY 2024 funds had not yet been spent because prior-year allocations must be used first.

Bennette then presented the status of the FY 2025 Council's General Appropriations (GA) funds. Of the original \$455,000 budgeted, only \$416,000 was available after a 20% restriction for budgetary savings. As of May 31, about \$40,000 had been spent, leaving approximately \$372,000 to be encumbered before June 30, 2025.

A proposal was made to allocate the remaining GA funds to Adult Education in partnership with the Department of Education. This would allow for a direct transfer of funds without the need for an RFP process. The program was described as "shovel-ready," and its relevance was supported by recent presentations to legislators and sector partners.

During this portion of the meeting, Pane Meatoga III joined the call as an observer.

Questions and discussion followed, including:

- Sean Knox asked about the future of Job Corp which was not funded in the new federal budget. He inquired about allocating funds towards Job Corps. Bennette explained that the program cut does not leave the infrastructure for Job Corp to continue.
- Trang Malone inquired about how students would learn about the adult education opportunities. Helen Sanpei (McKinley Community School for Adults) shared outreach methods including newspaper, television, school partnerships, and use by the Department of Public Safety.
- Dion Dizon asked about supporting displaced Job Corps youth. Bennette Misalucha explained that local workforce boards on Maui and O'ahu are working to absorb participants, though housing remains a concern.

A motion to encumber the remaining GA funds for Adult Education was made by Dion Dizon and seconded by Sean Knox. The motion passed unanimously with 6 voting members present.

IV. Report on the Disposition of Program Year 2022 Unexpended Funds (00:27:46 – 00:35:08)

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha reported on the disposition of Program Year 2022 (PY 2022) unexpended WIOA funds, referencing pages 20–23 of the packet.

She explained that \$1.5 million in PY 2022 funds had been allocated across 3 projects with government agencies. These include projects undertaken by:

- Hawai'i P-20
- UH Community Colleges

- UH System / Chamber of Commerce of Hawai‘i

All agencies involved have been informed that services must be rendered and funds encumbered by June 30, 2025, to avoid lapsing back to the federal government. All projects are reported to be on track.

In addition to agency contracts, three projects were awarded through an RFP process:

1. Axios Consulting – to research, evaluate and make recommendations on the American Job Center and state workforce system.
2. Becker Communitcations – Focused on American Job Centers, with campaign rollout expected during summer and fall. Funds are encumbered even if services continue beyond June 30.
3. GATeam – Scheduled for June 27–28, 2025, for board executive directors, fiscal officers, and stakeholders. The training responds to recent staffing changes at the Administrative Services Office and aims to standardize fiscal knowledge and develop a reference handbook.

There were no further questions. The update concluded this agenda item.

V. Special Projects Report (00:35:08 – 00:37:14)

Vice Chair Dion Dizon delivered a report on behalf of Special Projects Chair Keith DeMello, who was absent due to business travel. Dion Dizon read a prepared statement outlining an assessment of the Council’s legislative engagement during the 2024 session.

The report noted that the Council’s legislative response mechanisms were successfully tested during the past session, allowing testimony to be delivered on key legislation.

Moving forward, it was recommended that the Council adopt a more proactive strategy by:

- Developing policy initiatives during the pre-session year;
- Initiating early discussions through the Special Projects Committee;
- Seeking formal Council approval in fall meetings;
- Entering each session with a clear and comprehensive legislative agenda.

This shift would allow the Council to shape, rather than merely respond to, legislation and better leverage its workforce expertise.

There were no questions or comments from the Committee.

VI. Certification of the Kauaʻi American Job Center (00:37:14 – 00:44:53)

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha presented findings from the April 9, 2025 site visit to the Kauaʻi American Job Center (AJC). As Kauaʻi does not have a local workforce board, the WDC is responsible for certifying the AJC under WIOA.

The review was conducted using a federally mandated checklist. Although the center demonstrated strengths, particularly in staff diligence, areas for improvement included:

- Staffing limitations, which restrict outreach;
- Lack of written policies, including those required under the ADA;
- Need for greater coordination among core partners;
- Limited engagement with the County’s Department of Economic Development.

As a result, the WDC issued a provisional certification with a corrective action plan and proposed extending the due date for compliance from June 16 to September 30, 2025, to allow more time for implementation.

A motion to endorse the provisional certification and updated corrective action timeline was made by Sean Knox, seconded by Trang Malone, and passed unanimously.

Cary Miyashiro inquired whether the McKinley Community School for Adults could potentially help run the Kauaʻi AJC. Bennette Misalucha informed that this would require a formal RFP process.

VII. Executive Director’s Report (00:44:53 – 00:50:30)

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha provided updates on several key items:

- Board Recruitment: The Council currently has four private sector vacancies and one labor representative vacancy. A potential replacement from the labor sector is being coordinated with AFL-CIO. Former member Eileen Caldwell is relocating to San Francisco but has agreed to stay on temporarily until a replacement is appointed.
- Implementation of the State Unified Plan: Currently developing the North Star. The Council is receiving technical assistance via a National Governors Association grant. The four Pillar Catalyst Teams have met multiple times and are working through their task lists. Each team will report on their progress at the Synergy Summit II on July 9, 2025.

- Transition to Attached Agency Status: The subcommittee working on the delineation of roles and responsibilities of WDD and WDC continues to meet with full transition anticipated by September 2025.
- Strategic Focus Areas for 2025: The Executive Director shared a slide highlighting areas of focus for the second and third quarters of 2025. The slide is available in the meeting packet posted on the WDC website.
- Upcoming Events:
 - Board Orientation: June 5, 2025
 - Synergy Summit II: July 9, 2025
 - Future of Work Conference: September 24, 2025
 - WDC has also been invited to deliver opening remarks at the Hawai'i on the Hill event.

VIII. Plans for Executive Director's Performance Review (00:50:30- 00:50:56)

Chair Ken Loui was not present; therefore, the discussion on the Executive Director's Performance Review was deferred to the next Executive Committee meeting.

IX. Announcements and Constituent Comments (00:50:56 – 00:51:40)

No announcements or public comments were made.

X. Next Meeting (00:51:42 – 00:51:59)

The next Executive Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, July 23, 2025, from 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM, held in person at Room 317, DLIR, and via Zoom.

XI. Adjournment (00:51:59 – 00:52:12)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:52 PM.