

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

BENNETTE MISALUCHA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII'
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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA**

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**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL'S
SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING**

Thursday, January 28, 2026

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Attendance:

Dion Dizon, Committee Chair

Pane Meatoga III, Committee Vice Chair

Thomas Chock, Committee Vice Chair

Keith DeMello, WDC Chair (present ~2:10pm)

Cheryl Cross, Executive Search Consultant, Inkinen Executive Search

Lei Ana Green, Workforce Development Division

STAFF:

Bennette Misalucha - Executive Director, Workforce Development Council

Jeanne Ohta – Employment Specialist, Workforce Development Council

Margaret Miura – Program Specialist, Workforce Development Council

LOCATION:

Remote Meeting via Zoom & Physical Location: 830 Punchbowl Street, Room #317, Honolulu, HI 96813

I. Call to Order [00:00:00 – 00:03:54]

Chair Dion Dizon called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

II. Minutes for the October 21, 2025, meeting [00:03:55 – 00:05:18]

Motion to accept the Minutes was made by Council member Cross and seconded by Council member Chock. The motion passed without discussion and unopposed.

III. Creation of the Military Spouses Permitted Interaction Group [00:06:00 – 00:]

At the November 19, 2025, WDC Council Meeting, the Council voted to deputize Trang Malone and Cheryl Cross, former Chair and Vice Chair of the Military and Veterans Affairs Committee to

continue with the Military Spouses Workforce Project Working Group and to report to the Special Projects Committee. To enable the work to continue, the motion to establish a permitted interaction group for the purpose of continuing the initiatives under the Military Spouses Workforce Project and report back to the Special Projects Committee was made by Council member Pane Meatoga and seconded by Council member Cheryl Cross. Motion was carried and Resolution 2026.1.28.26 CREATING A PERMITTED INTERACTION GROUP FOR THE MILITARY SPOUSES WORKFORCE INITIATIVE was adopted on January 28, 2026.

IV. Special Projects Discussion Roles and Responsibilities [00:09:00 – 00:43:29]

The mission of the Employer Engagement Committee is to strengthen partnerships with Hawaii's business community by aligning workforce programs with employer needs, improving access to talent, and supporting strategies that help employers hire, train, and retain a skilled workforce.

Executive Director (ED) Misalucha presented current outline of committee roles and responsibilities and coordinated the discussion on how the Special Projects Committee plan to advance board priorities.

Point of Order. Special Projects Chair Dizon pointed out, following Robert's Rules, procedurally, the meeting minutes do not require motion. Following a call for corrections, if there are none, the minutes are approved. Executive Director Misalucha will consult with the parliamentarian, Mr. Pruitt. WDC will then abide and adopt this rule for future meetings.

V. Legislative Plans [00:43:30 – 00:52:09]

- WDC Chair DeMello and Council member Scanlan, as authorized by the Workforce Development Council, met and will keep Labor Director Butay and Deputy Director Bill Kunstman informed of bills and testimony throughout the legislative session.
- Stay consistent with the scope of the WDC and as it pertains to the state unified plan and four pillars.
- Identify specific bills and ensure they are on the board agenda for discussion
- Provide testimony on and for the confirmation of WDC nominees and renewing of current board members for a second term
- Testified on Workforce Bill 742 which established the Workforce Data Sharing Working Group
- Thomas Chock, Designee for Council member James Tokioka, raised interest in the WDC following up on Senate Bill SB 3170. If appropriate, it will be placed on a future meeting agenda.

VI. Executive Director's Report [00:52:10 – 00:54:44]

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha provided a brief overview on

- Unified plan, implementation
- Status of the modified state plan
- Quarter activities and events
 - Consider attending the March 4 Internship Summit
 - Nominations are currently being accepted

VII. Announcements - none

VIII. Next Meeting [00:54:45 – 00:55:12]

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 7, 2026, at 1:30 p.m., online via Zoom and in person at 830 Punchbowl Street, Room 317.

IX. Adjournment [00:55:13]

Meeting adjourned at 2:26 p.m.