

DC Workforce Investment Council Board Meeting Minutes
900 19th Street, NW, 6th Floor Suite 600
Washington DC

Date: Wednesday, July 17, 2024
Time: 3:00 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.

Board Members Present In-Person: Drew Hubbard, Matt Frumin, Antoniette Mitchell, Unique Morris-Hughes, Laura Zeilinger, Kunta Bedney, LaTara Harris, Paul Kihn, Maurice Edington, Glenn Starnes, Nicole Hanrahan, Tony Cancelosi, Thomas Penny, Angela Franco, Darryl Wiggins.

Online: Steve Boney

Board Members Absent: Anita Bonds, Antwanye Ford, D Evans, Liz Debarros, Solomon Keene, Jr.

Staff Present: Deborah Russell, Anika Holmes, Portia Bates, Kim Diggs, Christian Jones, Fern Hawkins.

Guests Present: Tamika Smith, Jaleel Shujath, Lauren Libera, Margaret Wissler, Marcia Lee, Faye Dustheap, Shane Blunt, Sheree Finley.

Agenda Items and Discussion:

I. Welcome

In the absence of Mr. Antwanye Ford, Executive Director Drew Hubbard called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. and welcomed the attendees. Director Hubbard emphasized the importance of energizing the committee structure and thanked Dr. Hartsock for hosting the DC Workforce Investment Council Board.

II. Roll Call/Establishment of Quorum

Deborah Russell, Associate Director of Performance & Impact conducted the roll call and confirmed that 14 board members were present. The only voting item is the April Board minutes which will be postponed until the September Board meeting.

III. Chairman's Comments

With Mr. Ford absent, Director Hubbard addressed the board, emphasizing the need for increased interaction with Deputy Mayor Nina Albert. He suggested having her appear before the board to discuss the linkages between economic and workforce development. Director Hubbard then introduced Deputy Mayor Keith Anderson to lead the meeting.

IV. Jobs in Infrastructure-BIL

Presenter: Deputy Mayor Keith Anderson

District's Comeback: Deputy Mayor Anderson emphasized the critical role his office plays in the District's recovery efforts post-pandemic, focusing on infrastructure improvements and workforce development. He highlighted the need for a talented workforce to support these recovery efforts, particularly through infrastructure projects.

Federal Funding and Projects:

- **DDOT Projects:** DDOT received a \$25 million federal grant for the rehabilitation of the New York Avenue NE Bridge and the Lincoln Connector Trail Project. These projects will create job opportunities and improve transportation infrastructure.
- **DOEE Initiatives:** DOEE secured over \$62 million from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to expand the Solar for All initiative, focusing on community and rooftop solar projects.
- **Electric Vehicle Infrastructure:** The District received a \$16.7 million grant from the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program to expand electric vehicle charging hubs. Overall, the District expects to receive over \$3 billion in federal funds for transformational infrastructure projects.

Workforce Development and Equity:

- **Green Pathways Program:** DOEE is leading this program, offering opportunities ranging from volunteer positions to a Fellows program, aimed at equipping individuals with skills in environmental sustainability.
- **Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program:** DDOT's DBE program focuses on expanding business opportunities for minority- and woman-owned companies involved in federally-funded projects.

Local Business Support:

- **DC Water Works Program:** As Chair of the Board of DC Water, Deputy Mayor Anderson discussed this program, which prioritizes local residents for construction and service contracts, ensuring that local utility jobs are filled by District residents.

Conclusion:

- Deputy Mayor Anderson expressed his commitment to supporting the District's workforce through DMOI's strategic initiatives and thanked the board for their time and input.

Follow-Up Items:

- **Action:** Explore the development of pathway tools around infrastructure jobs, as discussed with Deputy Mayor Anderson.
- **Action:** Consider further engagement with Deputy Mayor Nina Albert on economic and workforce development linkages.

V. Benefits Cliff

Presenter: Geoff King (DHS)

- **Understanding Benefits Cliffs:** Geoff King defined benefits cliffs and discussed the challenges they pose, particularly their potential to disincentivize work and complicate decision-making for affected families.

DC DHS Efforts:

- **Career MAP Pilot:** Overview of the Career MAP program, designed to mitigate benefits cliffs through rental assistance, financial benefits, and career navigation support.
- **Involvement in National Efforts:** DC DHS is part of the Beyond the Cliff Coalition, focusing on strategies to address benefits cliffs nationally.

Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta CLIFF Tool Implementation Study:

- **Key Findings:** The CLIFF tool was found to be most useful for financially stable individuals who can plan for the long term. Challenges included difficulty in fully integrating the tools into existing workflows due to time and staffing constraints.
- **Takeaways for Practice:** Enhanced training for coaches is needed to improve discussions around the loss of public assistance. Additional support is required to embed the CLIFF tools more effectively into organizational processes.

Discussion and Feedback:

- Attendees discussed how the study's findings could be applied within DC DHS efforts, focusing on improving the integration of CLIFF tools and enhancing training for staff.

Follow-Up Items:

- **Action:** Consider how the study's recommendations can be incorporated into ongoing efforts, particularly in enhancing the Career MAP program.

VI. Targeted Hiring Events and Wraparound Support

Presenters: Erin Bibo and Tonya (City Works, DC)

- **Shared Vision for the Future:** Erin emphasized the goal of advancing DC residents through relevant education and training programs, connecting them to jobs that drive economic growth.
- **Wraparound Supports:** Tonya discussed the need for streamlined wraparound supports that accompany residents through education, training, and into their early career stages.
- **Next Gen Sector Partnership Approach:** Erin introduced this approach as a mechanism to mobilize industry leaders from targeted sectors, focusing on ROI-driven participation.
- **Employer and Strategic Partner Roles:** Employers lead partnerships by defining agendas and priorities. Strategic partners provide insights into talent needs, while the convener acts as a translator between employers and partners.

Results from Hiring Events:

- Hospitality Hiring Events: 110 candidates were hired since November for roles such as Front Desk Agent and Server. A success story highlighted Carlie-Ann, a DCPS graduate hired as a Front Desk Agent at Washington Georgetown Marriott.
- Construction Hiring Events: 42 candidates received offers for roles including Pre-Apprenticeship and Skilled Labor. Brendan Jenkins, a graduate of the So Others Might Eat Workforce Program, was noted for interviewing with Gilbane.

Employer and Service Provider Feedback:

- Disconnect in Job Readiness Definitions: There is a need to align definitions of job readiness between employers and training providers.
- Wraparound Support Resources: Erin emphasized the critical need for a one-door wraparound support resource for residents, employers, and providers.

Follow-Up Items:

- Action: Continue refining sector-specific job readiness protocols and explore the development of a one-door wraparound support resource for residents, employers, and providers.

VII. Servicing Residents through Apprenticeships

Presenter: Kunta Bedney (EASRCC)

- Career Pipeline Creation: Kunta highlighted the importance of establishing a career pipeline in the construction industry, particularly for residents in Wards 7 and 8.
- Focus on Apprenticeships: Apprenticeship programs are crucial for providing sustainable career opportunities, and transitioning residents from training to long-term employment.
- Demographics and Challenges: Recruitment is focused on Wards 7 and 8, where residents face significant challenges such as low income and high unemployment.
- Construction Market Dilemmas: The construction market in DC is large, but union density is low, and training programs are often disconnected from career pathways. Minority contractors and CBEs face challenges in partnering with unions.

Proposed Strategies:

- Advocate for city-funded nonprofits to partner with building trades unions to prioritize hiring DC residents.
- Encourage the use of Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) to ensure minority companies and workers from targeted zip codes are employed on local projects.
- Facilitate discussions between trades, nonprofits, and businesses to absorb residents into union apprenticeships.

Success Story:

- Kunta shared the example of the Carpenters Union partnering with the nonprofit Run Hope Work to place DC residents on the St. Elizabeths project, fulfilling First Source requirements.

Follow-Up Items:

- Action: Further efforts to integrate apprenticeship programs into broader workforce development strategies, particularly in construction.

VIII. BuildWithin Presentation

Presenter: Ximena Hartsock (BuildWithin)

- BuildWithin leverages technology to scale workforce solutions, providing tools for managing and optimizing apprenticeship programs. The organization serves as an apprenticeship intermediary, helping to start, manage, and scale apprenticeships effectively across industries.

BuildWithin's Offerings:

- Explore: Smart matching and pre-apprenticeship management.
- Expand: On-the-job training software that integrates with U.S. Department of Labor databases and is compliant with various standards (SOC II, WACG AAA, language access).
- Nationwide Impact: BuildWithin is an approved intermediary by the U.S. Department of Labor, making it a trusted partner in expanding apprenticeships nationwide.

Tech Accelerators and Pre-Apprenticeship Programs:

- Since 2022, BuildWithin has facilitated 11 pre-apprenticeship programs specifically for DC residents, serving over 200 individuals. The programs focus on areas such as CompTIA, tech fundamentals, digital marketing, and cybersecurity.

Success Story:

- Ximena shared the success story of a BuildWithin apprentice funded by DC WIC training dollars under ARPA, highlighting the program's impact on career trajectories in high-demand tech fields.

Follow-Up Items:

- Action: Consider strategies for further collaboration with BuildWithin to scale successful apprenticeship programs in tech fields.

VIII. Public Comment

Commenter: Anika Holmes, Associate Director of Business Engagement

1. Guest: Jaleel Shujath raised concerns about the lack of centralized case management for workers seeking to advance their skills and inquired about resources to direct people to appropriate training programs.

Response: My Journey DC is the tool that is used as a resource and referral tool for job seekers to be connected with agencies and community partners.

2. Guest: Marcia Lee about the training program as a Doula on the Eligible training provider program list.

Response: Ms. Lee the DC WIC is aware of the lack of places for labor and delivery of a baby and we are excited about the new hospital coming to Ward 8 however that is not one of the high-demand occupations based on Labor Market data.

IX. Adjournment

Conclusion: Executive Director Hubbard adjourned the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

Next Steps/Action Items:

1. The development of pathway tools around infrastructure jobs, as discussed with Deputy Mayor Anderson.
2. Further with Deputy Mayor Nina Albert on economic and workforce development linkages.
3. Recommendations from the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta study into ongoing efforts, particularly in enhancing the Career MAP program.
4. Sector-specific job readiness protocols and explore the development of a one-door wraparound support resource for residents, employers, and providers.
5. Apprenticeship programs into broader workforce development strategies, particularly in construction.
6. Further with BuildWithin to scale successful apprenticeship programs in tech fields.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:15 p.m.

Minutes Prepared By: Fern Hawkin, DC WIC Office Assistant