



GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

**Governor's Workforce Council
June 8, 2023**

Minutes are unapproved

Council Members Present:

Mark Argosh, Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Paul Schenfeld for Cindi Bigelow, Keith Norton for Charlene Russell-Tucker, Paul O Robertson for Alexandra Daum, Chris DiPentima, Ed Hawthorne, Amy Porter, George Anderson for Brian Doubles, Todd Berch for Dante Bartolomeo, Jeff Auker, Joseph Gianni, Bethany Zemba for Judy Olian, Kathleen Silard, Leticia Colon de Mejias, Maggie Hulce, Martin Guay, Michelle James, Monette Ferguson, Paul Costello, Richard Jacob for Peter Salovey, Joanne Lombardo for Radenka Maric, Ray Pineault, Sal Menzo, Peter Holland for Shane Eddy, Shawn Coyne, Shellye Davis, Tywanda Talley-Rushing, Terrence Cheng

Council Members Absent:

Anthony Medici, Chris O'Connor, Erika Smith, Jay Williams, Jeffrey Flaks, John Murphy, Leslie Torres-Rogriguez, Neil O'Leary, Peter Nystrom, Rohan Freeman, Sharon Barr, Suresh Muthuswami, Steve Sullivan, Toni Walker, Tiana Ocasio, Wes Alexander, Keri Hoehne

Due to technical difficulties the meeting begins late.

Chair Argosh calls the meeting to order at 1:19pm and provides opening remarks.

Welcomes all partners and stakeholders to the Q2 meeting. Mark notes that this meeting is focused on launching the process of updating the workforce strategic plan. Mark briefly mentions meeting agenda items including that Governor Lamont will be joining the meeting to provide some updates.

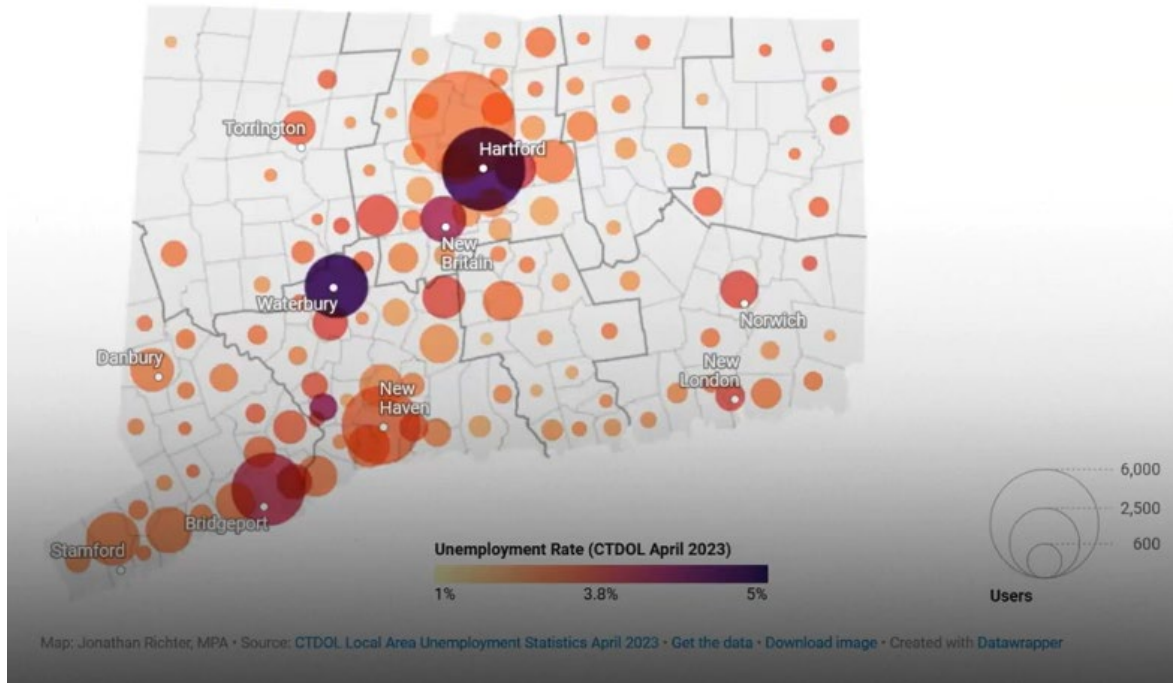
At 1:21pm Kelli Vallieres shares the OWS Report.

Vallieres notes that last meeting was moved to accommodate Workforce Summit. Kelli thanks everyone for their dedication in the recently ended legislative session including the Appropriations Committee, Senate, and House for their work in the new budget. Kelli outlines key OWS and GWC updates due to the new budget and notes that OWS maintains status as an independent agency and will be APO'd to DECD. Kelli outlines some key bills from the legislative session and notes that a more detailed update will come next meeting in July. Kelli thanks everyone for their participation in the Workforce Summit and notes the value of the diversity of attendance at the event.

Vallieres provides updates on CareerConneCT. Almost 3,000 individuals are actively working with workforce boards and community-based organizations. She discusses CareerConneCT data including that 70% of registrants are under the age of 40, 25% of users have a credential, and 45% of users have a GED. Kelli shares that CareerConneCT programs are on track to meet year one goals. Kelli notes importance of supportive services and shares a breakdown of spending. Kelli shares an interactive map on unemployment data where the CareerConneCT marketing campaign has been focused and notes the importance of prioritizing hard to reach communities.



CareerConneCT Splash Page Views with Unemployment Data (8/14/22 - 06/06/23)



Vallieres announces a \$30m rental assistance partnership between OWS and the Department of Housing.

Department of Housing / OWS Partnership

- Governor Lamont June 5th Press Conference announcing *UnitedCT Workforce Rental Assistance Program*
- Up to ~\$30M in DoH ARPA funding will support CareerConneCT and individuals participating in other state-funded training programs
 - Time-limited funding: June – November 30, 2023
- The stipend enables individuals to receive longer-term housing supports since it is renewable for up to six months (or longer depending on length of training)
 - Program maximum is 12 months or \$15,000, which also takes into account any rental assistance that a tenant may have already received through previous UniteCT programs
- Pilot with The WorkPlace, Inc. supported 15 individuals

Chair Argosh calls the committee to vote at 1:37pm.

Motion to approve February 23, 2023 minutes made by Amy Porter, and seconded by Keith Norton. No discussion 25 Yea, 0 Nay, 3 Abstain.

Motion to if available, proceed with an electronic vote of the Council for FY24/PY23 WIOA Allocations made by Keith Norton, and seconded by Kelli Vallieres. No discussion 28 Yea, 0 Nay, 0 Abstain.

Voting concludes at 1:44

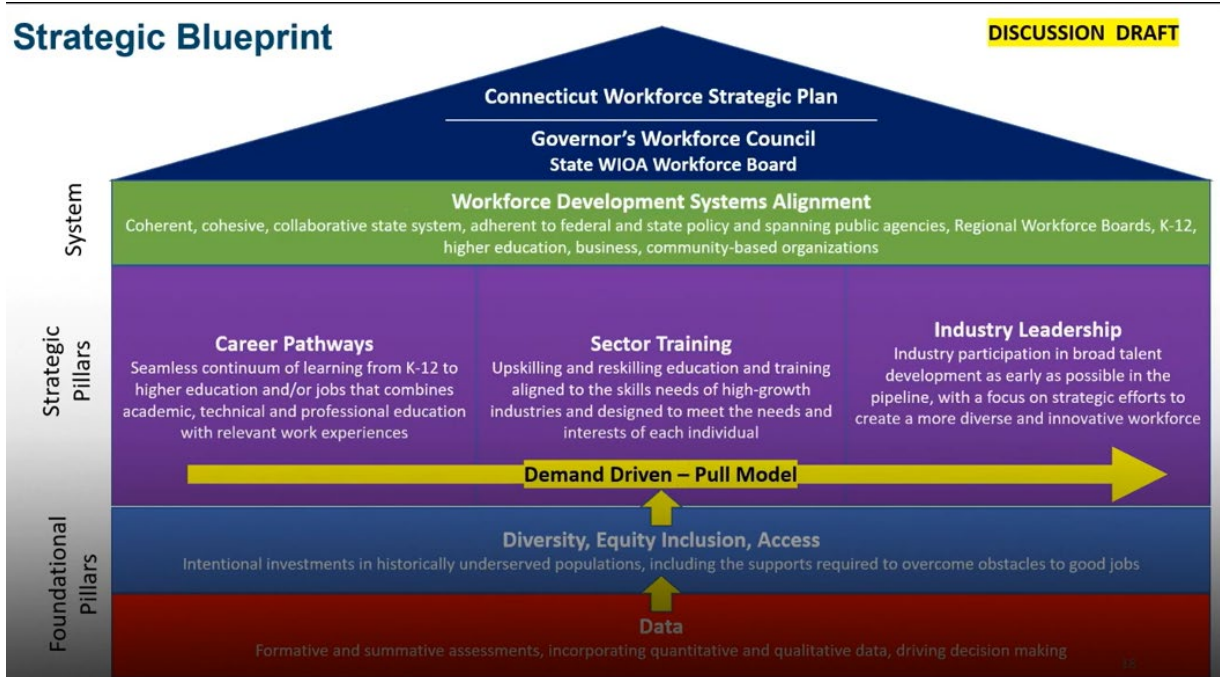
At 1:44pm Chair Argosh provides an update on the Strategic Plan



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Mark shares that over the last few months OWS, government officials, members of the GWC, and other stakeholders have developed a draft framework for a revision of the workforce strategic plan including reexamined vision and mission statements. Argosh notes that feedback is encouraged as he shares the updated draft mission and vision statements.

Mark moves on to the strategic blueprint and notes that the new plan is set up like a house. He notes that DEIA is central to all workforce initiatives as well as data. He outlines the three strategic pillars: career pathways, sector training, and industry leadership.



Argosh shares a slide on the differences of the inaugural strategic plan versus the renewed approach. Argosh provides a Connecticut labor market snapshot and shares data and explores the relationship between education and training and how that correlates to unemployment rate and earnings. Mark notes that the new updates to the strategic plan will include an honest and transparent review of what's worked to date. Mark outlines five cross-cutting pillars aligned to state strategic plan (WIOA) including DEIA, career pathways, sector training, industry, and data.

Leticia Colon de Mejias notes that benefits cliffs should be included in DEIA. Leticia notes that people are worried if they're working they won't receive benefits. Leticia mentions that disabled folks could work and then lose supports that they have including insurance, and notes that there should be a larger conversation on insurance at a reasonable cost for those who work.

Kelli Vallieres notes that there was a lot of interest in the legislative session and plans to engage with legislators in conversations on a potential benefits cliffs pilot program. Vallieres also notes that there have been conversations at the federal level with the National Governors Association.

Rick Sebastian notes that the Atlanta Fed tool that is used nationally and in Connecticut is not coded to conduct anything related to SSI or SSDI payments which is a major portion of the disability community. Rick notes that without a consolidated and coordinated effort there is a long way to go on benefits cliffs.



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At 2:13pm Chair Argosh asks Kelli Vallieres to introduce the workforce compact that will be discussed in breakout sessions.

Vallieres frames the breakout discussions. Vallieres shares that the compact was shared in April at the Workforce Summit with a lot of stakeholder input. Kelli guides an initial discussion on how to incorporate the compact into the strategic plan.

At 2:20pm Kelli Vallieres welcomes Governor Lamont

Governor Lamont provides an update on the budget, tax cuts, and education and workforce. Governor Lamont reiterates his commitment to workforce development and economic growth.

Kelli Vallieres thanks Governor Lamont for his work in formulating a budget that includes an expansion for OWS to continue and expand partnerships and build an aligned workforce system. Vallieres points to the CareerConneCT data and that year one goals are on their way to being met.

Marty Guay shares that this forum is important for the future of the state so that all of the collaboration happens in one place. Marty shares his enthusiasm for scaling programs with stakeholders on the call.

Joe Carbone shares a comment, but experiences audio issues making it difficult to hear.

George Anderson mentions that Synchrony is seeing unprecedented cooperation with Stamford, Mayor Simmons, the Governor's Office, OWS, and that is allowing them to share best practices. George notes the value of wraparound services that are provided through partnerships.

At 2:28pm Governor Lamont leaves the meeting and Kelli Vallieres introduces the breakout sessions: Education & Career Pathways, Sector Training, and Industry Leadership

Breakouts by Pillar

- **Breakout 1: Education and Career Pathways**

- Facilitators
 - Jeff Auker, Associate VP, Head of Innovation & Delivery, Infosys
 - Terrence Cheng, President, CSCU
 - Keith Norton, Chief Strategic Planning Officer, State Department of Education

- **Breakout 2: Sector Training**

- Facilitators
 - Cathy Awwad, President, Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board
 - Joe Carbone, President & CEO, The WorkPlace
 - Kelli Vallieres, Chief Workforce Officer, Office of Workforce Strategy

- **Breakout 3: Industry Leadership**

- Facilitators
 - Mark Argosh, Executive Director, Social Venture Partners
 - Marty Guay, VP of Business Development, Stanley Black and Decker



At 3:10pm Mark Argosh welcomes everyone back from breakout rooms

Marty Guay recapped the Industry Leadership breakout room. Marty discussed regional sector partnerships as a great forum for being able to understand levels of scale, strategy, and innovation. Marty noted the need for growth and the challenge of matching students with companies, interns with start ups, etc. Change management process needs to be undertaken by organizations, and it needs to be sustainable but simple for employers.

Jeff Auker recapped Education and Career Pathways and noted no pushback to the compact. Jeff discussed bringing together K-12, secondary education, and workforce training and readiness. Jeff noted the importance of adult ed and making sure the workforce system doesn't let them go. Jeff discussed centering the learner and potential worker and the importance of wraparound services. Jeff notes that the groundwork and willingness is there, but we need to institutionalize that and measure the systems and opportunities being created.

Terrence Cheng adds that how we talk about things and opportunities is extremely important. Especially how people talk about different opportunities and comparing them to each other. An example of this is the nontraditional pathway and the terms that are used that may turn people away. The goal of this is inclusivity.

Joe Carbone recapped Sector Training and discussed barriers. The group discussed success as well as barriers that still exist. Joe states the need to address foundational challenges in our economy. Joe mentions the importance of increasing the size of the labor pool and acknowledging the labor shortage. Specifically, upskilling incumbent workers and embracing technology.

At 3:23pm Chair Argosh thanks everyone for joining the meeting and for their time.

Mark notes that there's a lot of work to be done to operationalize the new strategic plan. Mark reminds everyone of the next GWC meeting on July 20, 2023.

Meeting concludes at 3:25pm.