

MT SWIB

STATE WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD

Special Board Meeting
December 5, 2024
9:00 a.m.
[Remote Meeting](#)

MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Hopfauf, Adam Gilbertson, Jennifer Cronk, Kerri Crowe, Sara Schreiner, Paddy Fleming, Katie Madsen (proxy for Superintendent Arntzen), David Smith, Sarah Swanson, Heather O'Hara, Bo Bruinsma, Matt Olson, Joe Thiel, Dylan Klapmeier

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Mike McGinley

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dale Carpenter, Mark Noland, Quinton Queer, Amber Terry, Jim Wonnacott, Jason Yager, Tony Brockman

STAFF: Jennifer Owen, Mandy Rambo, Crystal Armstrong, Galen Hollenbaugh, Sam Loveridge

CALL TO ORDER (9:00 a.m.): Chair Hopfauf called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL (9:00 a.m.): Jennifer Owen completed Roll Call. A quorum was present.

AGENDA (9:02 a.m.): Chair Hopfauf asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

David Smith moved to approve the agenda as presented and Jennifer Cronk seconded a motion to approve the agenda. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT (9:02 a.m.): Chair Hopfauf asked for public comment. No members of the public present.

OCHE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2025 SESSION (9:03 a.m.): Joe Thiel reviews OCHE & MUS priorities. Focus on:

- Present Law Adjustments (HB 2) ♣ Base-plus inflationary cost adjustments
- Pay Plan (HB 13) ♣ Pre-session negotiated pay plan
- Long Range Building Program (HB 5) ♣ Capital Projects ♣ Major Repairs ♣ Authority Only →
- MUS Initiatives (HB 2 & 10)/New proposals included in budget:
 - Online J.D. Program, \$1.0M: Develop a hybrid online J.D. program at the University of Montana to aid in meeting Montana's need for lawyers in rural areas
 - CyberMontana Program Expansion, \$3.15M: Enhance Montana's cybersecurity by providing a statewide hub for education resources

- Security Information & Event Management, \$1.0M: Initial funding for SIEM implementation for UM and affiliates as well as operation and enhancement funding for MSU
- Enterprise Resource Planning System Replacement: Replace the existing ERP system within the community colleges.
- Also interested in expanding 1-2-Free, which is not in Governor's budget

Board members ask questions and discuss.

GOVERNOR'S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2025 SESSION (9:18 a.m.): Dylan shares the Governor's priorities for workforce development:

- Montana's path to security and prosperity: Budget message
- Strong foundation of prosperity depends on: economic freedom, safe communities, strong families
- Full point reduction to 4.9% for income, expand earned income credit and homestead credit
- Increase business exemption tax to \$3
- Public safety investments: \$150M in upgrades to prison, \$250M for community safety funds, increase in pay for MHP. \$8M in opioid funding, \$2M for drug treatment courts
- \$100M in teacher pay and classroom support, above inflationary present law adjustments. K-12 and post-secondary infrastructure investments, CTE investments
- Millions in infrastructure investments across the state
- Wants to continue focusing on cost of living and housing costs
- Themes in agencies: focus on best uses of WIOA, good cross-agency & cross-sector collaboration, consolidate board operations, electronic processing for filings/compliance, greater occupational skill equivalency recognition, strategic implementation of bed tax bills, reducing work comp costs.

Video of Governor discussing the budget available at news.mt.gov. Board members ask questions and discuss.

MT DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES (9:36 a.m.): Mandy Rambo shared Commerce priorities, included in 8 bills:

- 3 Commerce Bills:
 - Exempt grants and loans from MEPA (only applies to issuance of grants and loans, not to the grantee's project)
 - Repeal Lewis & Clark bicentennial license plate
 - Bed tax use distribution – red tape relief bill; focusing on encouraging more tourism in eastern and rural Montana.
- 3 from Commerce-attached agencies
 - Montana Heritage Commission: addresses finance facility and other administrative issues
 - Montana Facility Finance Authority: Allows some low cost capital financing for health care and education
 - C-PACE clean-up bill: defines multi-family housing so that it can be included.
- 2 statutorily required bills
 - Montana Coal Endowment: HB 11 (water/wastewater/bridge funding)
 - Montana Historic Preservation: HB12
- Commerce has no new budget asks for this session.
- No housing policy proposals – will come through the Governor's Housing Task Force, Commerce will provide support to the task force.

No questions from Board members.

MT DLI LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2025 SESSION (9:46 a.m.): Commissioner Swanson presents DLI proposals and invites feedback on the content:

- Three broad themes: lower taxes on Montanans, reduce dependence on general fund, increase capacity & efficiencies
- Reducing dependence General Fund: reducing spending throughout agency, transition Office of Community Service into state special revenue dollars, transition Human Rights Commission into ESA (UI tax special revenue fund)
- Lower taxes: reduce UI taxes on employers when there are low unemployment rates over time
- Increase capacity across the Department: invest in a new comprehensive software (through existing funds, no GF appropriation), will now improve related processes to capture efficiencies; focus on professional licensing bureau.
- Will consider additional professional licenses, but no new boards.
- Largest proposal will be consolidation of six small boards into two boards: Board of Facility Health (have to be attached to healthcare facility or hospital to do your job, no independent businesses) and Board of Rehabilitative Health (athletic trainers, OT, speech/language, rehab).
- Substantial equivalency: licenses between states. Every board defines it differently, MUS has own definition also. Bill proposes to insert a statutory definition of substantial equivalency; will allow boards to determine how to meet statute, but will create uniform definition.
- Will otherwise support efforts from legislators to expand workforce programs

WIOA reauthorization: Stronger Workforce for America Act. Bipartisan, bicameral agreement reached. Unclear if Congress will act before sine die adjournment. Need to transition WIOA match out of GF and transition that match to ESA. Need movement toward Unified State Plan for WIOA, increase collaboration between WIOA and Perkins.

BOARD QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS (10:11 a.m.)

SWIB Members invited to share any legislative proposals they are working on, related to workforce development, in their professional roles.

Montana Chamber: for workforce, focus on child care and support for pro-development tools for housing (TEDDs, TIFs, URDs). Number one overall is preserving Medicaid access.

Commissioner notes the capacity of DLI to help partners draft legislative proposals related to workforce, ensure we can provide technical guidance and advice.

PUBLIC COMMENT (10:14 a.m.): Chair Hopfauf asked for public comment. No public comment was made.

ADJOURNMENT Chair Hopfauf adjourned the meeting at 10:16 a.m.