

# BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

**Date:** November 8, 2023

**Time:** 2pm – 3pm

## Committee Attendees

Andrew Warrington (co-chair), Michael Chiapetta, Christine Coves, Cleve Dixon, Kraig Kistingner, Kim Kuchenbrod, Todd Lowery, Leigh McConnell, Lavon Nelson, Biswa Puhyal, David Sabathne, Jennifer Serino

## Guest Attendees

Molly Cook, Tory Davis, Annamarie Dorr, Jennifer Foil, Todd Lee, Mark Lohman, Lee Reese, Dan Serota

## Staff Attendees

David Gallagher, Christy Montgomery-Jones, Stephanie Veck

## 1/2/3. Welcome/Approval of Meeting Minutes/Co-Chair Comments

Co-Chair Andrew Warrington began by requesting a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes from October 3, 2023. Kraig Kistingner motioned for approval, Leigh McConnell seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Andrew then welcomed Daniel Serota, from Aon Corp., who is a leading advocate for apprenticeships in Illinois, and is Chair of the IWIB's Apprenticeship Illinois Committee. Andrew noted that Daniel's committee and the BEC have some overlap in their areas of concern, so we need to make sure that we multiply our efforts and avoid duplicating them. Daniel will speak a bit about what his committee is doing, and how we can combine efforts. Daniel then introduced Jennifer Foil, who is staff to the Apprenticeship Illinois Committee.

## 4. Discussion of BEC Tasks/Projects Through 2024

Andre began this topic by briefly recounting the previous meeting's discussion of the four main focuses for the Committee moving forward, as shown on the following slide that was shown:

## “WHAT” for the BEC through 2024

	MESSAGING	MESSAGING TO EMPLOYERS (IN TERMS THEY UNDERSTAND AND VALUE).
	MARKETING	EXPANDING THE REACH OF THE SYSTEM.
	PARTNERSHIPS	SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS (EQUIP IMPORTANT SECTORS WITH TOOLS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE).
	DATA	DATA & INFORMATION (OBTAIN BASICS AND IMPORTANT INSIGHTS).

Andrew opened up the meeting for discussion of these items -- “What” the BEC should be doing through the end of 2024 – asking if this is a fair representation of the discussion, and if there were any concerns with this direction. Kraig replied that he thought it was a good summary of the discussion. Jennifer Serino agreed, saying that she likes the structure and that it rolls up to exactly the concerns of local programs as they manage their business outreach and engagement.

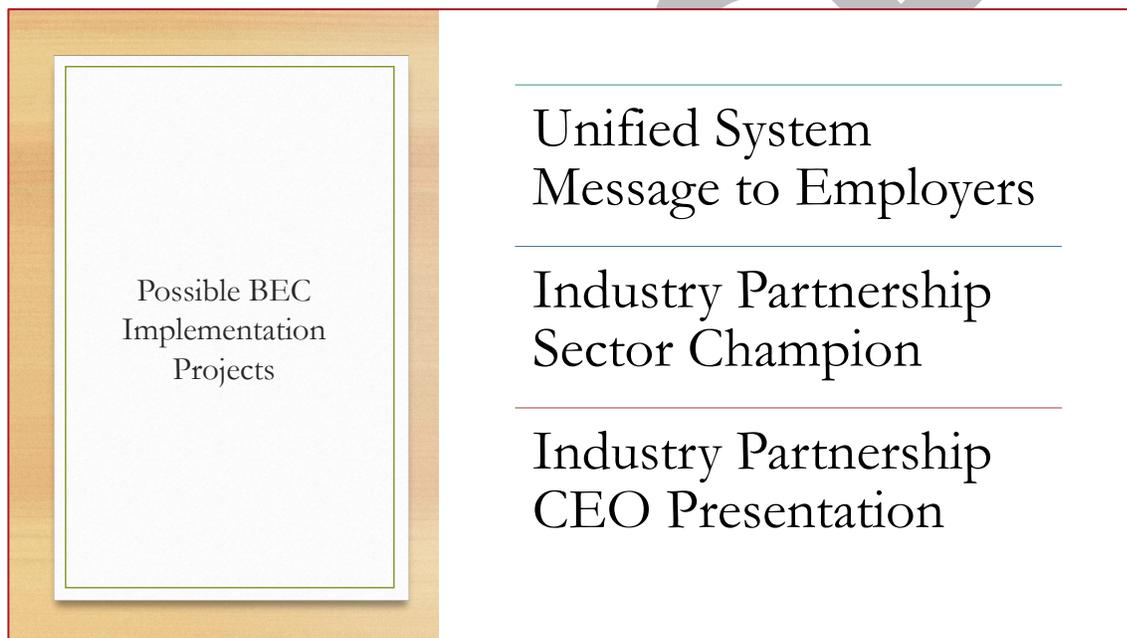
Given that agreement, Andrew moved to the second slide, which included a listing of “How” the BEC might go about attaining these goals:

## “HOW” for the BEC through 2024

- Pull back the sub-committees to make progress on focused, vital projects.
- BEC to meet monthly for 1 hour max.
- One or two site visits to look at best practices.
- Consider a Business Services Summit
  - Part of the State Workforce Summit in the Spring of 2024.
- Be realistic about what work volunteer committee members can do.
  - For the rest look to resources from DCEO and other partners.
- Review and coordinate what work other IWIB committees are doing (e.g., Apprenticeship Illinois Committee), in order to combine, focus, and eliminate duplication.
- Attract new members from recent IWIB appointments.

Andrew began by discussing the request to pull back the work of the subcommittees into the work of the full committee. He noted that this was not in any way an indictment of the work of those groups, but a realization that if the BEC was going to be meeting monthly it would be too much to ask of members to also attend monthly subcommittee meetings.

From there he went through each of the dot points indicated on the second slide. The remainder of this agenda item was a discussion of possible tasks and projects and relate to the four committee “pillars” shown on Slide one. To that end, David Gallagher showed two additional slides, one listing possible BEC implementation projects based on work already completed:



David Sabathne and Kim Kuchenbrod discussed the status of the two industry partnership items, and their readiness for implementation by actors outside of the IWIB and the BEC, such as the state-level core partners and the regional Unified Business Services Teams. To that end, Kim recounted the used of the Industry Partnership CEO Presentation in the development of an industry partnership project in Peoria.

David G. also showed a slide containing a list of potential developmental projects for the BEC that correspond to the four “pillars:”



Chris Caves of the Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce gave a brief overview of some of the partnership work that has been happening in that area, particularly how economic developers have been working with workforce development in that area.

A discussion followed regarding the implementation question, and one suggestion in that vein was that materials developed by the BEC should be housed and indexed so they can be utilized by other entities such as the regional Business Services Teams, Chambers of Commerce, etc.

Following another brief discussion of the listed developmental projects, Andrew asked for a motion and a second to approve the four “pillars” as a guide to the BEC’s work going forward. Prior to the vote on this, Lavon asked if this action needed to be reflected in what was going into the Unified State Plan. David G. responded that he didn’t think it included descriptions at this level of detail, but he would check with Drew Thomason.

## 5. Coordination With IWIB Apprenticeship Illinois Committee

Daniel Serota then discussed the work of the Apprenticeship Illinois Committee. He began by noting the presence of Michael Chiapetta, a BEC member with whom he created the Chicago Apprenticeship Network in 2016. He then talked about a recent effort to get industry and community feedback on what apprenticeship should look like, how we can improve the system, and how we can make it easier for businesses to get engaged.

He discussed the upcoming National Apprenticeship Week and its role in promoting businesses that are using apprenticeships, as well as highlighting and raising the profile of non-traditional apprenticeship programs such as those run by community college.

He also mentioned the Apprenticeship Ambassador program, which is an effort to equip and utilize apprenticeship program participants and graduates to highlight and amplify the message and advantages of apprenticeships within their industries and their communities. In this and many other ways, the goal of the Committee is to grow apprenticeships and amplify the outreach across the state.

Jennifer Foil, the Committee's staff person, also mentioned the U.S.D.O.L. expansion grant that Illinois recently received to assist in developing the infrastructure of apprenticeships across the state. These funds will be pushed out to local and regional areas to support their Unified Business Services Teams as they develop consistent messaging and outreach across all partners regarding all workforce development services, not only apprenticeships. Also, a marketing contractor has been brought on board in order to assist with messaging about apprenticeships.

#### 6. Request From IWIB Justice-Impacted Employment Workgroup

Kraig provided a brief overview of the Career Pathways & Targeted Populations Committee and its Justice-Impacted Employment Workgroup. He introduced Molly Cook, staff to the Committee, who shared a request of the BEC members to respond to a short survey regarding this population. This survey asks respondents to rank a number of topics by their perceived importance, list webinar topics that they might be interested in, and assist in the development of a listserv of employers committed to hiring justice-impacted individuals.

Also, Mark Lohman, chair of the Workgroup, noted that the survey is targeted to employers, not strictly to businesses, as employer is a word that encompasses many types of organizations that may be interested in hiring justice-impacted individuals.

#### 7. Other Business

There was no other business.

#### 8. Public Comments

There was no public comment.

#### 9. Adjournment

Kraig Kistingner moved to adjourn, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_, and unanimously approved.