

**MEETING MINUTES
NYC WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
QUARTERLY MEETING**

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

3:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

One Liberty Plaza, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10006

Attendees

Board Members Present:

Lauren Andersen (Designee)	Colleen Galvin	Merrill Pond
Laurice Arroyo	Henry Garrido	Adria Powell
Linda Baran	Sarah Henderson	Edgar Romney
David Bolotsky	Christina Ho	Daphany Sanchez
Daniel Bustillo	Matt Klein	Wendy Star (Designee)
Nicole Dais-Lewis (Designee)	Degan Leopold	
Saudia Davis	Randy Peers	

Members of the Public Present:

Paula Bailey	Tim Johnson	Greg Morris
Taylor Clayton	Zain Khan	Valerie Mulligan
Cass Conrad	Diandra Malahoo	Yurij Pawluk
Scott French	Jane Martinez Dowling	Simone Rodriguez
Liz Gallo	Zhao Min	SinTing So
Dynishal Gross	Jennifer Mongiori-Corcoran	

NYC Talent Staff Present:

Adolpho Casillas	Leah Hebert	Daniel Liss
Brendan Collins	Stephanie Klocke-Whittenberg	Joe Rhoades

Tess Edwards	Tenzing Kunsang	Jasmine Vega-Pegram
Sarah Evers	Doug Lipari	
Zamira Kamal	Chris Neale	

Opening Remarks

- Co-Chair Merrill Pond called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm and welcomed meeting attendees.
- Co-Chair Merrill Pond gave brief updates on the 2026 Board meeting calendar, the Strategic Planning process, and development of the Strategic Road Map. She also noted the optimism surrounding the incoming mayoral administration and recognized Board members serving on the transition team and committees, including:
 - Grace Bonilla (Transition Co-Chair)
 - Felix Matos Rodriguez (Committee on Youth & Education)
 - Daphany Sanchez (Committee on Transportation, Climate, & Infrastructure)

Welcoming Remarks

- Doug Lipari, Executive Director of the NYC Office of Talent and Workforce Development, thanked the Board for their commitment during this transition period. He emphasized that the Board is well-positioned to play a critical role in shaping workforce strategy with the new administration. He noted that the Strategic Road Map is nearing completion and will serve as a guide for future work.

Board Business

- **Vote:** Co-Chair Merrill Pond requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 8, 2025.
 - **Motion:** Dave Bolotsky motioned to approve, with Colleen Galvin seconding the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Director's Report

Chris Neale, Director, NYC Workforce Development Board, presented a Director's report to members.

- **WIOA Local Plan:** The New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) deemed complete and approved the 2025-2029 WIOA Local Plan following the Board's previous vote to finalize and submit the plan at the October 8th meeting.

- **Funding Update:** The third and final tranche of WIOA funding for FY26 was received in mid-October following a brief delay due to the federal government shutdown.
- **Upcoming Audit:** The United States Department of Labor (USDOL) will conduct a Consolidated Compliance Review of WIOA implementation in New York State starting in February 2026. NYC was selected as a sample area for this standard audit covering program, governance, and fiscal elements of WIOA implementation.

Agency Update – Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)

DYCD Deputy Commissioner Valerie Mulligan presented the "Community Resources for Employment and Development" (CRED) program, an advanced training initiative for justice-impacted, low-income, or unemployed youth and adults aged 18-40.

- **Program Details:** Includes work readiness, occupational training, and paid internships at \$20/hour, with wrap-around services.
- **Expansion:** Currently operating eight programs in 2025; eight new awards were made this fall to launch early in 2026. Funding is \$780,000 per provider per fiscal year (not including participant wages).
- **Staffing Model:** The program mandates a specific staffing plan (eight full-time employees) to ensure adequate support.
- **Board Feedback:**
 - Randy Peers, Board Member, asked why the government prescribes staffing plans rather than allowing providers flexibility. He suggested issuing "blank slate" RFPs to foster innovation. He also praised the Brownsville Culinary Center CRED program
 - Deputy Commissioner Mulligan responded that prescriptive staffing is necessary to prevent understaffing and ensure providers can meet contract deliverables. She also described how DYCD solicited and incorporated extensive community feedback into designing the model that way.
 - Henry Garrido, Board Member, supported the prescriptive approach to ensure accountability and praised the Renaissance Technical Institute CRED program for its impact in Harlem and Staten Island.
 - Commissioner Dynishal Gross (SBS) highlighted the City's adoption of "challenge procurement," a methodology recently approved by the Procurement Policy Board that allows agencies to source innovative solutions by posing specific problems to the field. While not necessarily more efficient to develop than traditional methods, this approach offers a distinct advantage over standard demonstration projects by allowing agencies to extend original contracts without re-solicitation, ensuring better continuity for testing new ideas. Although currently limited by certain funding

sources and a general learning curve across the city, SBS and EDC are actively utilizing this model to foster diverse, vendor-driven solutions for complex municipal needs.

Agency Update – Department of Small Business Services (SBS)

SBS Deputy Commissioner Yuriy Pawluk provided an update about WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs:

- **Workforce1 Contract Implementation:** SBS selected vendors for new contracts starting this year, including Goodwill, EDSI, and Grant Associates. The Workforce1 Industrial and Transportation Career Centers contract started on July 1, 2025, with the remainder of the network commencing on October 1, 2025. Before the contracts even began, SBS engaged in extensive planning with and provided technical assistance, with particular emphasis on the one new vendor in the system, Goodwill Industries of Greater New York and Northern New Jersey. SBS staff provided frequent on-site help and strategic planning around the data analytics system, Worksource1, and coordination with the New York State Department of Labor. While the initial transition has led to a slower start in hires, dedicated work has led to an encouraging recovery: October's numbers stabilized at the prior year's level, and preliminary data for November shows an increase in placements and customers served over the same period last year. To sustain and accelerate this improvement, the department is implementing enhanced professional development, improving the data dashboard for targeted support, developing individualized performance plans for each center, and engaging community-based organizations through a new grant program to boost business development.
- **Jobs NYC:** SBS conducted more than 40 hiring halls in 2025, reaching 15,000 people with a 95% employer satisfaction rate.

SBS Commissioner Dynishal Gross provided an explanation of the amount of “carry-in” from FY25:

- The total FY26 budget is nearly \$74 million, an increase of about \$10M compared to the FY25 budget due to a mix of factors, including mandated City salary increases, increases in the indirect cost rate paid to vendors, and increases in the cost of delivering services. According to Commissioner Gross, SBS is managing a funding shortage (approx. \$29M) by utilizing carry-in funds (\$41.7M) and implementing cost-cutting measures like reducing real estate footprints. The FY26 budget is set at \$73.8 million (a \$10 million increase from FY25) to accommodate negotiated staff salary increases, mandated vendor cost hikes, and rising fixed costs such as real estate, software, and security. The \$41.7 million carry-in is a deliberate, strategic tool

designed to maintain system stability and service levels despite a reduction in federal awards, which decreased from \$65 million last year to \$58 million this year. Anticipating further federal reductions, the carry-in is projected to deplete rapidly over the next three years (\$30M in FY27, \$8M in FY28, to \$0 in FY29), potentially leaving a \$20 million budget shortfall by FY29. To address the looming gap, SBS is actively working to reduce real estate costs and is seeking increased City Tax Levy (CTL) investments to manage federal funding risks.

- **Board Feedback:**

- Board Member Henry Garrido expressed concern that most of the current Workforce1 contracts, are run by for-profit institutions. He noted that the single exception highlighted by the presentation was Goodwill, a nonprofit. Mr. Garrido stated that for-profit entities typically collect a 15% to 18% for-profit fee on the contract amount) before any funds are spent on direct employee wages or program delivery, in addition to allocated costs for rent and overhead. He stated that it seems implausible that the department could not replicate the success of the nonprofit model seen with Goodwill across other centers, especially given the presence of quality nonprofit providers in various boroughs that could deliver services without “extracting” profit.
- Mr. Garrido also raised concerns about an alleged compliance issue where one of the contractors allegedly violated Paid Family Leave laws. He asked about due diligence and penalties for such violations.
- Commissioner Gross responded to the concerns regarding the selection of for-profit providers by detailing the competitive and transparent nature of the solicitation process. SBS released a competitive solicitation and conducted significant outreach, including partnering with the New York City Training and Employment Coalition (NYCETC) to specifically publicize the opportunity to providers. The selection process, which included the award to Goodwill as a qualified nonprofit, adhered to all WIOA and City rules for ranking and rating. Furthermore, the solicitation review panel included NYC Talent, DYCD, and HRA to include additional insight from other workforce agencies. Regarding the perceived "for-profit fee," the Commissioner clarified that the new contract structure includes a 20% performance-based component of the budget for all providers. This 20% is accessible to the provider only if they achieve all established goals and deliverables outlined in the contractor's "report card." While this component appears differently in the budgets of for-profit contracts versus non-profit contracts (as non-profits cannot claim a "profit" under federal rules), the intent is the same, according to

Commissioner Gross: to ensure all vendors are incentivized to achieve maximum impact for job seekers.

- Commissioner Gross confirmed SBS would review the specific labor violation and follow up.

Discussion of Bylaws Revision

Co-Chair Merrill Pond led a discussion of the board bylaws revisions, focusing on the need to review and update:

- **Overview:** The Board's Bylaws have not been updated in over 10 years. Proposed revisions would address modernization, member nominations, budget processes, procurement processes, Board priorities, and an annual meeting calendar
- **Process:** A redlined version will be reviewed by the Law Department before being shared with the Board for feedback.
- **Board Feedback:**
 - Board member Henry Garrido raised concerns about retroactive contracts (registering contracts after work begins).
 - ED Doug Lipari confirmed that the bylaw revision aims to include process language to ensure the Board reviews contracts prior to registration.
 - Board member Degan Leopold Inquired about the Board's role in procurement and agency oversight, asking for clarification on the proactive goals expected within the procurement process and the current RFP process. Additionally, she also inquired about the Board's level of engagement with upcoming agency transition memos, specifically asking whether members would have access to these documents or the opportunity to provide direct input on the operational strategies outlined within them.
 - ED Doug Lipari addressed the questions regarding procurement, noting that the Board has the flexibility to define how it provides feedback on contracting. He emphasized a strategic shift toward engaging agencies and the broader workforce ecosystem both internally and externally before the release of solicitations. Regarding the transition, ED Lipari confirmed that while all city offices are currently preparing transition materials, NYC Talent is committed to ensuring the Board's perspectives are reflected. He welcomed feedback from Board members to ensure their insights are incorporated into the documents submitted to the administration.
- **Vote:** Co-Chair Merrill Pond requested a motion confirming the need and intent to amend the bylaws.
 - **Motion:** Henry Garrido motioned to approve and Dave Bolotsky seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Work Requirements

HRA Administrator Scott French presented on changes to work requirements attached to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, colloquially known as “food stamps,”) and Medicaid, followed by a brief Q&A:

- **SNAP Changes:** Administrator French described the re-implementation of ABAWD (Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents) work requirements. The current NYS waiver expires in February 2026, with compliance beginning in March 2026. Approximately 100,000 existing and 130,000 new SNAP recipients may be impacted.
- **Medicaid Changes:** New federal requirements for Medicaid work compliance are expected to launch in December 2026, with guidance due by June 2026.
- **Board Feedback:**
 - Randy Peers asked if the Work Experience Program (WEP) still exists. Administrator French clarified that WEP is discontinued; compliance is now met through employment, training, or "community service" volunteering.
 - Henry Garrido expressed concern for seasonal City workers (e.g., lifeguards or crossing guards) who are not eligible for City health benefits and who may lose access to Medicaid during off-seasons due to fluctuating work hours. He also asked about data-matching between State and City systems to streamline compliance tracking.
 - SBS Commissioner Dynishal Gross asked about the "benefits cliff." Administrator French noted that state legislation currently allows a 6-month income disregard up to 200% of the federal poverty level to aid transitions.
 - SBS Deputy Commissioner Yuriy Pawluk mentioned that work experience and work-related experience are not exactly the same thing. He noted that it is important that we be mindful of the spectrum of different opportunities, and for some individuals who have been out of the workforce for a while, a community service experience or work-related experience may be more appropriate, but it's not necessarily going to pay wages.
 - Cass Conrad, from the Petrie Foundation and invited by the Board to participate as a guest subject matter expert, expressed how overwhelming the scale is in terms of impacts for people and system levels. She asked if there was an analysis of the number of “positions” required in the employment centers in the City to receive those impacted by the work requirements changes.
 - Board Member Matt Klein asked what “counts” as community service or volunteering.

- Greg Morris from the NYC Employment and Training Coalition and invited by the Board to participate as a guest subject matter expert, noted his ongoing dialogue with Administrator French in his capacity as a representative of the intermediary coalition. He expressed a strong desire for those in the intermediary space to work in close alignment with the Board to maximize communication and ensure strategic consistency. Mr. Morris emphasized a shared sense of partnership, stating that all parties are "in this together," a sentiment he pledged to continue championing to ensure the entire workforce ecosystem remains on the same page.
- Co-Chair Adria Powell mentioned that 57% of home care workers rely on SNAP and Medicaid – they are working, but the paperwork burden will be a challenge.
- **Next Steps:** HRA is holding a briefing with the Robin Hood Foundation on December 8, 2025, to outline how nonprofits can become volunteer sites for compliance.

Meeting Closing

Co-Chair Adria Powell thanked the presenters and members for the robust discussion. She noted that the 2026 meeting calendar will be distributed soon.

- **Adjournment:** Co-Chair Powell adjourned the meeting at 5:00 PM.