

**STATE OF NEVADA  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, February 6, 2025**

**The meeting of the Board of Economic Development was called to order by Governor Joe Lombardo at the State of Nevada Building, Governor's Conference Room, 1 State of Nevada Way, Las Vegas, Nevada, 89119 and the Capitol Building, Old Assembly Chambers, 101 N. Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada, 89701.**

**VOTING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Governor Joe Lombardo, State of Nevada  
Lieutenant Governor Stavros Anthony, State of Nevada  
Secretary of State Francisco Aguilar, State of Nevada  
Ms. Debra Jacobs, Chair Emeritus, MJS packaging (on-line)  
Mr. James A. Barrett, Jr., President & Founder, The JABarrett Company (on-line)  
Mr. Raymond Specht, Founder & CEO, Specht Leadership Consulting  
Ms. Sasha Stephenson, President, SSS Public Affairs  
Dr. Weldon Havins, Director, Medical Jurisprudence and Ophthalmology, Touro University Nevada  
Ms. Yolanda King, President, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Y. King Strategies

**NON-VOTING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr. Chris Sewell, Director Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation  
Dr. Kris Sanchez, Director, Department of Business and Industry  
Ms. Patricia Charlton, Officer in Charge, Nevada System of Higher Education  
Mr. Thomas Burns, Executive Director, GOED

**NON-VOTING BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

Ms. Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT**

Alex Bacchus, Northern Regional Director, GOED  
Ashley Thompson, Film Incentive Program Coordinator, Nevada Film Office, GOED  
Carli Smith, Director of Communications, GOED  
Danette Tull, Deputy Director, Nevada Film Office, GOED  
Danny Miller, ISO & Technical Support Specialist, GOED  
Dorian Stonebarger, Deputy Director, GOED  
Elaine Silverstone, Director of Workforce Development, GOED

Jeremiah Mesquita, Government Contracts Advisor, Nevada APEX Accelerator, GOED  
Joan Rueben, Director, Nevada APEX Accelerator, GOED  
John Rice, Government Contracts Advisor, Nevada APEX Accelerator, GOED  
Kim Spurgeon, Director, Nevada Film Office, GOED  
Kristen Spencer, Business Development Coordinator, GOED  
Kyeema Peart, Director, Office of Entrepreneurship, GOED  
Melanie Sheldon, Senior Director of Business Development, GOED  
Michelle Sibley, Director of Human Resources, Diversity, and Inclusion, GOED  
Nathan Jackson, Deputy Director, Nevada APEX Accelerator, GOED  
Shari Davis, Director, Rural Economic & Community Development, GOED  
Sherry Lloyd, Program Compliance Officer, GOED  
Steve Scheetz, Research Manager, GOED  
Stephen Wood, Director of Strategy & Public Policy, GOED  
Susan Skaggs, Executive Assistant and Office Manager, GOED  
Henna Rasul, Office of Attorney General, State of Nevada, GOED Open Meeting Law Attorney  
David Newton, Special Counsel to the Colorado River Commission and GOED

**GUESTS PRESENT**

Amanda Berry Jones, EDAWN  
Betsey Fretwell, LVGEA  
Ben Polsky, CADC Reno 265, LLC  
Chris Reilly, Office of the Governor, State of Nevada  
Chris Weasler, CADC Reno 265, LLC  
David Feldman, Findlay Machine & Tool, LLC dba Kreate  
Hayden Poinier, NNDA  
Heather Brown, LVGEA  
Madeline Armstrong, Office of the Governor, State of Nevada  
Marco Giambagno, Orbinox America Inc.  
Mitch Keenan, LVGEA  
Natalie Brown, NSHE  
Perry Ursem, City of North Las Vegas  
Randy Looney, Orbinox  
Shelli Long, NV Department of Taxation  
Sonny Vinuya, Office of the Governor, State of Nevada  
Tatjana Vukovic, NNDA

**1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND ESTABLISH QUORUM**

Governor Joe Lombardo, State of Nevada, called the meeting to order. Ms. Melanie Sheldon, Senior Director of Business Development, Nevada Governor’s Office of Economic Development (GOED), called roll, and quorum was established.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 14, 2024, BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY GOVERNOR LOMBARDO TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 14, 2024, BOARD MEETING MINUTES. LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, STAVROS ANTHONY SECONDED.**

**MR. RAY SPECHT ABSTAINED AS HE WAS NOT PRESENT AT LAST MEETING. THE MOTION PASSED.**

**4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE AND DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Tom Burns, Executive Director, GOED, provided the Executive Director Update.

**General**

Campus for Hope — In 2023, legislature approved \$100M of funding to match \$100M in private dollars for a facility or facilities for individuals and families at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness. In a planned initiative in Southern Nevada designed to address homelessness and envisioned to be a treatment community that would offer a wide range of services: housing, healthcare, job training, and support for mental health and addiction. The application, which was approved on Jan. 17, establishes Nevada’s largest public-private partnership to provide help for those who want help.

WaterStart — Through a partnership with GOED and SRI, WaterStart released the “Building a Waterwise Economy” report, a waterwise economic framework that aligns water resource incentives with economic development: <https://goed.nv.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Building-a-Waterwise-Economy.pdf>.

**Business Development**

GOED has seen consistent momentum in new project inquiries and progress on existing projects. Current leads include a lithium-ion battery cell manufacturer, a medical device manufacturer, and a cell manufacturing facility for the solar industry.

Two companies have conducted site visits with our RDA partners since the previous board meeting.

Currently, five companies have expressed interest in submitting abatement applications for the May GOED board meeting.

In 2024, GOED Northern Regional Director Mr. Alex Bacchus worked with the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN) to welcome Boxout to the state of Nevada. Boxout is a family-owned, national distributor of spa, massage, beauty, fitness, rehabilitation, chiropractic, and wellness products.

### **International**

CES 2025 took place in early January. The International and Business Development team met with six foreign countries, including 12 potential companies. These face-to-face meetings were an opportunity to share progress in key sectors, strengthen international relationships and explore future collaborations.

### **Innovation-Based Economic Development**

GOED's SSBCI Technical Assistance will be adding another component to its existing program with the approval of the funding for the Small Business Opportunity Program by the Nevada Legislature's IFC in December.

In September, the U.S. Treasury selected Nevada as one of only 12 states to receive a \$4.2 million three-year grant. Mr. Karsten Heise, GOED's Senior Director of Strategic Programs and Innovation, wrote the application. GOED will again partner with the Nevada Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

Additional assistance will be provided to healthcare businesses and small manufacturers. The SBDC will also provide small business training and advising services for three Nevada Native Nations. GOED is now waiting to receive the grant contract from U.S. Treasury.

GOED's Mr. Heise will serve as co-principal investigator for UNR's NSF engines application "Recharge Nevada – a Coalition for Energy Innovation" to be submitted by Feb. 11. This project will be supported by the Knowledge Fund, which is going to receive a boost through the inclusion of a substantial budget enhancement in the 2026-2027 executive budget.

The Individual Career Mapping Program (ICM), which connects underserved populations with Nevada's in-demand industries, is expanding its partnerships. Together with the City of North Las Vegas Library, ICM will partner with Cristo Rey St. Viator Catholic High School, as well as with Help of Southern Nevada and Chef Jeff. In northern and rural Nevada, cohorts will launch in early 2025 with partners Reno VA Hospital, Elko County School District's Jackpot High School, and the Domestic Violence Resource Center in Reno.

### **Nevada APEX Accelerator**

On Jan. 10, the Nevada APEX Accelerator team hosted a meeting with Pentagon officials in Las Vegas. The Pentagon helps to partially fund APEX programs nationwide. They discussed the nation's need for even more innovative companies to sell their goods and/or services to local, state

and federal government agencies. The meeting also covered division data such as a subset of Nevada APEX clients pursued and won \$48 million worth of government contracts for the July 16 - October 13, 2024, reporting period.

### **Workforce Development**

Earlier this year in January, CES provided lots of opportunities for GOED's workforce director to engage with forefront leaders and trends representing the space. As an outreach and partnership professional, Elaine Silverstone, Director of Workforce Development, networked to meet Dr. Liesl Riddle, who holds significant leadership roles in workforce, including as Dean of George Washington University, College of Professional Studies, and as champion of the Capital Workforce Innovation Consortium. Ms. Silverstone welcomed Dr. Riddle to GOED to meet our team and her partners in the Southern Nevada greater workforce ecosystem. Rich conversation ensued and all were invited to join Dr. Riddle's panel at CES, "Reinventing Workforce Development in the Era of AI."

The current cycle of WINN funded programs, and there are 17 to date this biennium period, are thriving with WINN investment and many celebrations and milestones have been accomplished to date. One such celebration occurred at the recent ribbon cutting ceremony at the College of Southern Nevada's Nursing Skills Lab expansion. GOED's Director of Workforce Development, Elaine Silverstone was invited to join the list of speakers to mark the event along with CSN Acting President Dr. Kibler, Clarissa Cota, Vice President, External Relations and Campus Operations, and Elisabeth Solomon, Director of Nursing among the panel. The Nursing Skills Lab will bring great capacity to the pipeline of skilled and licensed CNAs and LPNs to serve the healthcare sector in this region.

### **Healthcare**

GOED Healthcare Industry Specialist, Mr. Vance Farrow, has been working with the principals of Infusion for Health, an infusion therapy provider that treats patients with autoimmune disorders and other chronic, complex health conditions. Infusion for Health has opened a fourth clinic to expand their southern Nevada footprint and will soon announce a new clinic in northern Nevada. An official grand opening will be scheduled for this spring.

Mr. Farrow is also working with Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) and the Nevada Action Coalition to pursue a grant opportunity with the Human Resources and Services Administration. The \$22.2M Nursing Workforce Diversity (NWD) Program is a four-year grant to increase nursing education opportunities for individuals who are from disadvantaged backgrounds (including racial and ethnic minorities underrepresented among registered nurses).

GOED is pleased to announce that V.E.W.DC has leased space and will open a minority-owned primary and specialty clinic with compounding and specialty pharmacy services aimed at serving our diverse community with comprehensive healthcare services. This will be the second minority-owned, sterile and non-sterile compounding pharmacy in the state. Additional expansion plans include an 18-unit mixed-income senior and healthcare workforce housing development.

### **The Nevada Film Office (NFO)**

The NFO continues to develop its community enrichment initiatives by hosting another informative panel as part of its Film Nevada Workshop Series. Held in partnership with the Clark County Library District, this panel will focus on navigating independent filmmaking, including producing, directing and distribution.

NFO Director, Ms. Kim Spurgeon and NFO Deputy Director, Ms. Danette Tull have both accepted roles as board members for the newly formed ACE Chamber. The chamber's mission is to support and elevate the arts, creative and entertainment sector in Nevada through advocacy, networking opportunities and resource sharing. Danette also serves as the board's co-vice president.

### **Office of Entrepreneurship**

The Office of Entrepreneurship has been instrumental in supporting the Desert Research Institute (DRI) as the Nevada partner to the NSF Engines application on "FutureFood" sovereignty and sustainability, led by the University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR). Bringing together Tribal leadership, business sustainability, pitch competitions and financial institutions, a robust proposal is due for submission by Feb. 11, 2025.

San Francisco's January session on coalition building for entrepreneurs was co-hosted by the Office of Entrepreneurship at the 2025 Online Community Unconference. Director Kyeema Peart has now been invited to co-chair Right to Start's National Entrepreneurship Leaders Network, to provide a unified collaborative platform for sharing Nevada's best practices and aligning national efforts, launching in February.

Also in February, the Office of Entrepreneurship will host an inaugural ecosystem panel at the U.S. Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship conference, bringing together data scientists, entrepreneurial investors, city and regional planners, and community operators to review Nevada's entrepreneurial leadership.

Supporting GOED's Main Street initiative, in March the Office of Entrepreneurship will launch a self-paced entrepreneurial training platform with Mesquite businesses and entrepreneurs, and national education partners. The platform is designed to increase throughput for business plan development, licensing and funding by ensuring basic and advanced concepts and tools are in place to access local resources.

### **Nevada Main Street**

GOED's Director, Rural Economic and Community Development, Ms. Shari Davis conducted a Southern Nevada tour through eight different communities, including Pioche, Caliente, Moapa Valley, Mesquite, Pahrump, Jackson Street in Las Vegas, Boulder City, and Henderson. The type of visit depended on the needs of the community, and included training, presentations, community outreach, and site visits.

## **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**

GOED's Ms. Jessica Sanders, CDBG Program Administrator and Ms. Sarah Lilly-Clark, CDBG Program Specialist, attended the grand opening of the Silver Sage senior center in Wells, which received \$1,015,000 in funding from CDBG.

CDBG staff are administering 20 open grants (18 CDBG, 2 CDBG-CV).

CDBG staff are working on the 5-year Consolidated Plan and Impediments to Fair Housing. This plan helps to set the priorities for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Emergency Solutions Grant Program (ESG), Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA), National Housing Trust Funds (HTF) for the next five years.

## **5. METRICS REPORT**

Mr Bacchus provided the quarterly performance report update.

In the fourth quarter of 2024, eighteen companies committed to adding 286 jobs to Nevada's economy in the next two years. Once these companies are fully staffed, the build-out job estimate is 458 employees. Of the 286 additional jobs, 52 were incentivized and 234 jobs were non-incentivized.

The average hourly wage paid by all assisted companies came in at \$42.76 in the fourth quarter of 2024, an increase of 31.3 percent from the \$32.56 reported in the previous quarter.

Capital investment by assisted companies (excluding nonstandard projects\*) totaled \$1.1 Billion in the fourth quarter, \$272 million of which is attributed to incentivized companies.

There were eighteen wins in the fourth quarter of 2024. This is slightly higher than in the third quarter and is up 200 percent when compared to the same quarter a year prior. New leads were down by 12.3 percent from the last quarter and up 36.2 percent from the same quarter a year ago. Prospects remained flat from last quarter but increased by 43.2 percent compared to the same quarter in 2023.

Of the 300 companies that have been abated since 2012 (across all abatement types, excluding withdrawn and noncompliant), 52.7 percent have had fewer than 50 employees within two years of operation. For the sixteen companies abated in 2024, eleven plan to have fewer than 50 employees in two years.

For the past ten years, the fiscal Return on Investment is 265%, meaning for every dollar abated the State and local governments receive \$2.65 in new taxes over the life of the abatements.

During the last quarter of FY24 and the first quarter of FY25, APEX Accelerator began operating under their renewed operating agreement with the Department of Defense - Pentagon. This marks the fourth reporting period since performance measurements have changed.

From July through October 2024 the NV APEX Accelerator was successful in assisting NV small businesses in getting 318 Contracts amounting to \$48.6 million. This is a decrease in the number of contracts and amount of awards by 25.2% and 28.8% respectively, when compared to the prior reporting period. Average Contract is \$152,955.

Small Disadvantaged Businesses (SDB) received 157 contracts for \$32.8 million.

Historically Under-utilized Business Zones (HUBZones) received 121 government contracts for \$13.1 million.

Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB) received 3 government contracts for \$107,116.

Women Owned Small Businesses (WOSB) received 37 contracts for \$53.6 million.

The number of Emerging Small Businesses (ESB's) certified in the first half of calendar year 2024 declined by ten percent from the same period last year and decreased by 19.6 percent when compared to the second half of 2023. The total number of ESBs that have been certified since 2014 now stands at 2,933.

The average contract amount in the first half of 2024 was \$78,622; up 16.9 percent from the second half of 2023 and up 32.3 percent from the same period last year.

In the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2025, the NFO fielded questions from 255 clients, 1.9 percent less clients than last quarter.

The Office is hosting the next panel in their informative workshop series in February on navigating indie filmmaking. The topics include production, directing and distribution.

Ms. Spurgeon and Ms. Tull were both appointed to the executive board of the newly formed ACE Chamber, promoting the arts, creative and entertainment industries. Ms. Tull serves as the board's co-vice president.

During the fourth quarter (October, November, December), \$1,783,244 was paid to 7 Communities.

CDBG staff closed 2 grants this period.

There are currently 22 open grants. For the standard CDBG program, there is one grant from 2021, 7 grants from 2022, 6 grants from 2023 and 6 grants from 2024. For the CDBG-CV program, there are two open grants from 2020.



## 6. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE UPDATE

Mr. Bacchus presented the Unemployment Rate Update.

As of December 2024, Nevada employment stands at 1,582,400 jobs, a gain of 0.7 percent from the prior year. The most recent figures represent an increase of 138,200 jobs over the pre-pandemic high. Nationally, employment grew just 1.4 percent over the year in December.

Nevada's unemployment rate is 5.7 percent as of December, unchanged from the prior month. The rising labor force participation rate suggests that more Nevadans are returning to the workforce, and Nevada continues to see steady job growth, led by Southern Nevada. However, job growth is slowing on account of higher costs causing employers to slow their pace of hiring.

## 7. ABATEMENT APPLICATIONS FOR BOARD APPROVAL

Secretary of State Francisco Aguilar asked for clarity regarding his responsibilities and obligations on the approval of these applications, questioning if these are mandatory approval requirements.

Mr. David Newton, Senior Deputy Attorney General (DAG), Special Counsel to the Colorado River Commission and GOED advised the Board could make a formal request to have the DAG provide an opinion letter on this matter.

Governor Lombard requested that Director Burns facilitate the opinion letter request and share with Board members, prior to the next scheduled GOED Board Meeting.

### A. CADC RENO 265, LLC

- **DATA CENTER SALES TAX ABATEMENT**
- **DATA CENTER PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT**

Ms. Amanda Berry Jones, Director of Business Development, Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN) introduced CADC Reno 265, LLC (CADC).

CADC plans to establish a collocated data center facility in Washoe County. CADC is part of the CENTRADigital Family which is reimagining that digital infrastructure landscape and empowering carrier, cloud, and content partners – called “C3” – through new, state-of-the-art, neutral connectivity hubs in high-demand, high-growth markets. CADC offers robust interconnection options to enhance network scalability, optimize cost efficiency, and ensure seamless connectivity for carriers, content companies, enterprises, the medical industry, and education.

The company will have a total capital equipment investment of approximately \$58m and will generate 11 full-time jobs within the first five years of operation with an average hourly wage of

\$35.72. Ms. Berry Jones was joined by Mr. Chris Weasler, Chief Executive Officer, and Mr. Ben Polsky, Director of Planning and Partnership.

Mr. Weasler noted CADC's mission to accelerate digital services through its purpose-built interconnection platform. The company intends to expand its business in Reno with a modern facility that will future proof the quality of the internet for both large and small digital stakeholders in Reno. CADC's facilities are neutral and support many partners that tend to be smaller scale rather than large or hyperscale data centers. As the demand for seamless data exchange and low latency connectivity grows, CADC is committed to providing secure, high-performance interconnection solutions that serve Reno's businesses, educational institutions, and residents. Additionally, CADC has a focus on key sustainability initiatives such as: partnering NV Energy and participating in their NV Green Rider Program; limiting water usage by employing air cooling techniques; using environmentally friendly building materials and prioritizing local construction firms in the bid for general contractors; and implementing other sustainable sources of energy including the installation of EV chargers and rooftop solar panels.

Mr. Specht asked about the company's connectivity with the University of Reno (UNR) and Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) and how the schools will benefit.

Mr. Polsky advised the company is exploring options for both job training and site visits as part of a community development program.

Governor Lombardo asked if GOED's Ms. Silverstone was aware of this.

Ms. Silverstone noted that there are WINN-funded projects at TMCC in data science expansion that might be a good fit for this purpose.

Ms. Patty Charlton indicated NSHE will connect with all companies following approval at today's meeting.

Dr. Kris Sanchez questioned if the company's wireless cooling design is proprietary and/or scalable.

Mr. Polsky indicated that it is not proprietary, and it is more difficult to scale with large data centers, but much more doable with smaller ones such as CADC.

Mr. Specht asked what co-located data facility entailed.

Mr. Weasler advised that a co-location data center is one that housed multiple tenants rather than a single tenant data center for entirely one company.

Mr. Specht asked for confirmation that the tax abatements, for approval in today's meeting, would be for the benefit of CADC and not include approval for any subsequent tenant abatements.

Director Burns confirmed this was correct.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR ANTHONY TO APPROVE THE DATA CENTER SALES TAX ABATEMENT, AND DATA CENTER PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT FOR CADDC RENO 265, LLC. DR. HAVINS SECONDED. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**B. FINDLAY MACHINE & TOOL LLC DBA KREATE**

- **SALES TAX ABATEMENT**
- **MODIFIED BUSINESS TAX ABATEMENT**
- **PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT**

Mr. Mitch Keenan, Senior Vice President, Business Development, Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGEA) introduced Findlay Machine & Tool LLC dba Kreate (Kreate).

Kreate is in the process of establishing a west coast production and distribution facility in the City of North Las Vegas. Kreate is a world class plastic products design, engineering and manufacturing company established in 2018, producing a variety of products for the retail market – storage totes, shelving, trashcans, chairs, and garden beds as well as other products. The company's largest customer is The Home Depot. Kreate's new facility will serve its client's western Regional Distribution Centers that then ship the product to various stores for sale.

The company will have a total capital equipment investment of approximately \$11.6m and will generate 31 full-time jobs within the first two years of operation with an average hourly wage of \$32.62. Mr. Keenan was joined by Mr. Perry Ursem, Economic Development Specialist, City of North Las Vegas, and Mr. David Feldman, Chief Business Officer, Kreate.

Mr. Feldman discussed the successes of the company's existing facilities, in Ohio and in Texas, noting that in each state, more jobs have been created, and more investment has been generated than the company's initial projections. The building in North Las Vegas will be 235,000 square feet but will have the capacity to expand further. Mr. Feldman further indicated the company's interest in working with schools, as well as through the workforce, and the goal is the training of people who present with good, basic skills.

Dr. Havins asked if the company plans to hire locally.

Mr. Feldman confirmed that the company does aim to hire locally, with the exception of some specific skillsets if these are not locally available.

Ms. Yolanda King asked about the company's attendance bonus program.

Mr. Feldman indicated that if workers do not use their days off, they are paid for them so as to have attendance be positive rather than negative.

Mr. Ursem indicated that this is a marquee manufacturing company that will be incorporating the opportunity to engage with school systems, both secondary and higher ed, to learn manufacturing 4.0, as well as create an opportunity to attract other like-minded companies in this space.

Dr. Sanchez asked if any of the machines, or components used for the molding, would be impacted by tariffs and could this potentially delay the project's construction schedule.

Mr. Feldman advised the majority of machines come from Japan and Korea, but noted that tools may be impacted, as some are sourced from Canada.

Ms. King asked about the method of calculation for the average hourly wage in Section 5(B) - Employment schedule, of the Abatement Application.

Ms. Sheldon explained that this is a weighted average hourly wage showing the average amount workers are paid per hour, taking into account the relative number of workers in different roles or groups.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR ANTHONY TO APPROVE THE SALES AND USE TAX ABATEMENT, THE MODIFIED BUSINESS TAX ABATEMENT AND THE PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT FOR FINDLAY MACHINE & TOOL LLC DBA KREATE. MS. KING SECONDED.**

**GOVERNOR LOMBARDO ABSTAINED FROM THE VOTE.**

**SECRETARY OF STATE AGUILAR WAS NOT IN ATTENDANCE AT THE TIME OF VOTE. THE MOTION PASSED.**

## **8. APPLICATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPROVAL**

- A. ORBINOX AMERICA INC.**
- **SALES TAX ABATEMENT**
  - **MODIFIED BUSINESS TAX ABATEMENT**
  - **PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT**

Director Burns advised Pursuant to S.B. 181, GOED's Executive Director may approve partial tax abatements with a projected value up to \$500,000. Therefore, Orbinox America Inc. (Orbinox) is approved for a Sales and Use Tax Abatement, a Modified Business Tax Abatement and a Personal Property Tax Abatement.

Mr. Hayden Poinier, Business Development Coordinator, Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDA) introduced Orbinox.

Orbinox plans to establish a manufacturing facility in Douglas County. Orbinox, a global leader in knife gate valve manufacturing, has over 50 years of expertise in designing, producing, and marketing industrial valves, slide gates, dampers, and hydraulic works solutions. The Nevada facility will focus on the manufacturing, and distribution, of water valves for fresh water and wastewater applications and industrial applications. Orbinox supplies a wide range of knife gate valves, penstocks/slide gates, dampers and valves for hydraulic works that are used in various industrial segments such as Water Treatment, Mining, Power Generation, Pulp and Paper, Food and Beverage, Petrochemical Industry, Steel Industry, Air Separation and Dams, Reservoirs and Hydro Solutions.

The company will have a total capital equipment investment of approximately \$2m and will generate 6 full-time jobs within the first two years of operation with an average hourly wage of \$32.52. Mr. Poinier was joined by Mr. Marco Giambagno, CEO of Orbinox.

Mr. Giambagno explained that the new warehouse factory will be dedicated to the assembly, testing, distribution, and collaboration with local manufacturing suppliers and will support the shift of manufacturing operations from Canada to Nevada. Mr. Giambagno indicated that Nevada was chosen for the expansion because of the friendly and supportive business climate.

## 9. **WORKFORCE INNOVATION FOR A NEW NEVADA (WINN) - UPDATE**

Ms. Silverstone and Dr. Natalie Brown, NSHE, Assistant Vice-Chancellor of Workforce Development, NSHE introduced this update.

Ms. Silverstone noted, at the November 14, 2024, GOED Board Meeting, the Board had requested a review of the current WINN program, and identification of ideas, refreshes, and potential improvements. Therefore, a document has been provided in the Board Meeting Materials that outlines proposed 2025 Enhancements to the Workforce Innovations for a New Nevada (WINN) Application. Therefore, enhancements and considerations, identified are:

**Section:** NRS 231.1467.2.b - The name of each business for which the applicant will provide the proposed program of workforce recruitment, assessment and training.

**Consideration:** Include in the application the sector as defined in the State Plan, followed by employer support.

**Section:** 231.1467.2.e - Evidence of workforce shortages within the industry to be served by the proposed program of workforce recruitment, assessment and training.

**Consideration:** Draw on Workforce Characteristics (i.e., wage & employment trends) as obtained from O\*Net.

**Section:** 231.1467.2.f - Evidence that there is an insufficient number of existing programs to develop the workforce needed for the industry to be served by the proposed program of workforce recruitment assessment and training.

Dr. Brown expressed gratitude for the collaboration between NSHE and GOED and noted that the WINN fund has been instrumental in the creation, customization, and expansion of programs in critical-need areas that align with GOED's target industries. Dr. Brown explained that GOED's support for these projects over the years has enabled NSHE Community Colleges to collaborate directly with business and industry to develop programs that meet specific identified needs as well as help create ongoing training programs addressing the broader workforce demands in the state.

Mr. Specht asked if WINN has a limited amount of funds assigned and if historically those funds have all been fully deployed during mandated timeframes.

Ms. Silverstone advised the WINN Program was 'use it or lose it' funding, and that a historical record exists of monies spent and reverted. In the current cycle, WINN is very focused on spend-down in accordance with the budget narratives that had been presented in original applications and added that WINN is asking all partners to submit any necessary amendments now to ensure that all programing remains on track.

Mr. Specht asked if prioritization should be applied to applications with a higher wage range and the possibility of funding these programs in the first instance to ensure the money is used most efficiently.

Dr. Brown indicated that there is a minimum wage requirement of \$17 per hour for the applications to proceed and explained WINN's goal of tying funding as closely as possible to the statewide workforce needs and the GOED State Plan. Dr. Brown noted this can be a bit of a balancing act to ensure that proposals are coming forward that meet the threshold requirement while also providing enough time to ramp up for rapid skill deployment.

Mr. Specht questioned how the wage requirement was established.

Ms. Silverstone noted that this is in NRS 231.147, which discusses the employed and positions gained for this training and that the positions will not be paid less than 80 percent of the lesser of the average industrial hourly wage in the state or in the country, in addition to the Board's vote in December of 2021 setting the minimum wage to \$17 per hour. Ms. Silverstone indicated that if the Board would find it useful to vote on what the minimum hourly wage should be now that the process has been updated and enhanced for 2025, WINN would certainly welcome the Board's varied and expert points of view.

Mr. Specht recommended a thorough analysis with a recommendation that could then be brought forth to the GOED Board for review.

Ms. Silverstone questioned if the analysis would be across sectors specifically as well as regions.

Dr. Sanchez recommended looking at which of the seven priorities have the highest wage rates or greatest need and ranking them in some sort of framework based on these variables given that all sectors are not equal. This needs to correlate with the greatest growth potential in the state, citing

some areas are more mature and do not need significant fostering, whereas developing sectors may require more and could have a higher wage potential.

Governor Lombardo added there is also consideration on equipment investment associated to develop the programs and continue to support the programs. As such, there should be scope to adjust the funding commensurate to the current need and future needs and maintenance needs associated with the programs.

Governor Lombardo directed Director Burns to meet with his team for more round tabling and then come back to the Board with possible recommendations or additional support based on the current model.

Mr. Sewell advised that if the WINN fund ever gets close to being maxed out, Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation (DETR) could potentially step in and assist with a lot of these programs.

## **10. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mr. Specht discussed peer analysis, amongst states, and whether there was public information or something internal for GOED to develop strategic goals and to determine enhancements. Mr. Specht cautioned against becoming a marketing agency for other states.

Director Burns assured Mr. Specht that this is an internal process rather than a public one that is part of the GOED board package. The Director further noted that other states/competitors keep score differently than Nevada does, thus eliminating the possibility for apples-to-apples comparison.

## **11. GOVERNOR LOMBARDO COMMENTS**

Governor Lombardo noted his belief that this is the last year of the statutory requirement to increase minimum wage on the previous legislation and indicated that he was unaware if there would be a bill coming forward in this session.

Ms. Stephenson indicated her understanding that there is a forthcoming bill for minimum wage but noted that she has not yet seen it.

**12. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**